

CLEOPATRA 53-52 BC
Gold Is Where You Find It
~or~
Supersize Me!

In 53 BC, Egypt continues to struggle financially. This is 4 years before Caesar steps foot in Egypt (12 years before Antony). Cleopatra, as co-regent with her father, is barely making ends meet with the year's taxes and some reclaimed funds from an embezzler, but she's looking at the future and cutting corners where ever she can. Gold mining is starting up from a previous plan, but it's not in coming fast enough. Cleopatra decides to take a lesson from previous dynasties who robbed the fabulous tombs of ancient pharaohs.

At 16 years old, Cleopatra is overwhelmed by her first relationship, and it takes some effort to get her to balance governing the empire with her own awakening. Unfortunately, it comes at the cost of disrupting other people's lives. Still thinking of the empire, she attempts to extend her influence in politics by reaching out to influential Roman women and matchmaking behind the scenes.

Banafrit, Dedyet, and Dakka all advance in their careers and relationships, with Kalek developing some surprising angles in entrepreneurship and Dedyet discovering the horrors of marriage counseling. Banafrit anxiously notices how way too many women seem to be attracted to her awkward husband. Astarte continues her long game for making babies with Kalek. Orestes quits his job in Alexandria to pursue Ensela, 2200 miles up the Nile in Meroe. A souvenir dealer in Thebes tries wear down the resistance of a fiercely independent woman he's loved all his life ... that will have nothing to do with him. Dedyet's twin sister takes a very Egyptian interest in her brother-in-law ... and a very unlucky deaf-mute orphan girl gets a reprieve.

See what it's like to be on the receiving end of arguing couples when it's your job. How will the divine Pharaoh manage when his daughter puts him on an allowance? Watch Cleopatra chase-slap Kalek around and around the Aphrodite shrine on her palatial luxury barge. Witness the possible origins of organized tourism, theme parks, franchised fast food, sports betting, ... and the chicken dance.

The future Kandake of Kush, Amanirenas (who fights Romans to a standstill in future) enters the story as a 10-year-old princess being groomed for the throne.

No stuck-up pompous elitist aristocrats eating "saahndwiches" on the "grahhnd piano" ... just the knuckleheads from your neighborhood.

It's a story about how people deal with unexpected situations and unintended consequences, and how sometimes the heart just wants what the heart wants.