



## *The Betty Letters*

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*I saw the place where Moses, the man who led the riffraff out of Egypt and out of the bondage of the Pharaoh of the day, was buried, or was said to have visited, or something like that. I felt wonderful at being in that magical place, touching the inside of the Cairo synagogue where, I was told by my Egyptian tour guide, Moses once walked and talked to his people, in the same way that I have talked to my people in Hongkong, before. All of the other tourists, whom I met, agreed with me. They were mostly Americans, who went around the synagogue, kissing stones and touching, reverently, the white marble alter, things and benches. Religious people do those things, you know. I had a bit of a problem, however, because I did not know that Moses lived in the Fourth Century before Christ. But my Egyptian tour guide, who said that he had a Master of Arts Degree in tourism and Egyptology, assured me that he was correct and that Moses lived at the time of Ramses II. My problem was that this Pharaoh reigned between 1279 B.C. and 1213 B.C., which was about eight hundred and seventy nine years before Moses was born, assuming that the Egyptian Master of Tourism and Egyptology was correct in all of his statements. Be that as it may, it was nice to see the religious ones, bowing and scraping to the holies of Egypt. The trip to this magical land was really wonderful, I must tell you! We saw The Valley of the Kings, The Valley of the Queens (not to be confused with homosexuals of today, those of Lan Kwei Fong, Hongkong Central), The Colossi of Memnon, The Temple of Luxor, the Luxor Museum, Karnak Temple, the Egyptian Museum, the Solar Boat Museum, and the Pyramids and Great Sphinx of Giza. It was like going back into time. I felt very holy at the end of those four days of touring Luxor, Cairo and Alexandria. I recalled, during my tour, having read about poverty in this part of the world and I was glad to be able to see it in Egypt for myself. While, I was told that nobody starves to death in this dictatorship, as is taking place in Ethiopia, Chad, and many countries on the African Continent, in Egypt, one sees people, living in shacks, made of mud brick, with no windows and with straw, being used as rooves. I would not like to live in those squalid conditions, but the Egyptian guide assured me that the people were very happy with their lot because, among other things, they had their donkeys and their long heritage as the people of Moses, and, it followed, of the God of Moses. Ah, religion! Isn't it wonderful!*

*I don't think you know this but Egypt has the lowest crime rate in the world. I could not believe it, knowing as I do about the crime rate in Hongkong. The tour guide explained that the people are happy to follow orders. He said that there were two kinds of laws in Egypt: Civil and religious. 'We hang rapists, murderers, and, sometimes, thieves,' the tour guide said. He went on to explain that hanging is a quick death. I asked him what was the prison population of Egypt. He said that the country had about seventy million people and only about twenty thousand of them were in prison. That means that, at any one time, only about 0.03 percent of the population is behind bars. I remarked that the system in Egypt was very efficient and effective. The tour guide thanked me for my comments and suggested that he hoped that the Government of Egypt would prosper in the years to come. I was in a tourist limousine, at the time of this enlightening tour, and, seated in the front of the limousine were two Tourist Policemen, one carrying a machine gun and one with just a little pistol. These lovely men showed me that the weapons were fully loaded and ready to be used if somebody came a little bit close to me. I felt very safe. As I left Alexandria on the last day of my four-day tour, all of the traffic had to be cleared away so that nobody could harm me. It reminded me so much of Hongkong when I decided to go on a shopping trip to Central.*

*I must tell you of one other thing in respect of my trip to Egypt: The country invented paper. And I always thought that the Chinese invented paper from reeds and vegetable fibres. I have to hand it to the Egyptians, they*

*beat China by about seven hundred years by inventing papyrus. I saw some of the ancient papyrus scrolls, on which were written The Book of the Dead. Some of the American religious zealots, who were visiting the museum in which these scrolls still hang today, wanted to kiss the scrolls through the glass coverings, but the Master of Arts in Tourism and Egyptology assured them that they were not holy relics. As one elderly American lady remarked: 'It can't hurt to take out a little insurance. How much can one kiss cost?' Ah, these wonderful Americans, no wonder they attacked Iraq in order to liberate the people, who were repressed by the former dictator, President Saddam Hussein!*

*Lastly, did you know that the Egyptians are part black, part brown and part white? South Africa would have had trouble in classifying them, prior to the all-race elections of April 1994 I think. Would that South African Government have called them 'Honorary Whites?' 'Second-class Whites?' 'Coloureds?' 'Blacks?' Interesting little conundrum, wouldn't you say? Even the Greeks of today refer to Egyptians as Orientals. I am not in the slightest bit prejudiced, I assure you, but I think that it is better to be one race than many races. Not that I think one has to be pure, but Chinese are Chinese and others are others, most of the others, being gweilos (white-skinned devils/ghosts). This is probably the reason that, every few miles, my limousine was stopped and a new batch of armed police looked us over in order to make certain that we were happy and safe. Clearly, the Egyptians do not feel secure in their own country and have to carry lots of guns and things in order to guarantee their security. In Cairo, there are many splendid military installations and other recreational facilities in order to make members of the militia happy in their work of rounding up crooks and would-be terrorists in the country. If one looks at the statues of the great leaders and religious people of Egypt, one notes that they are all standing in a fighting mode: Fists clenched; eyes, looking straight ahead; one foot in front of another, ready to pounce on an enemy. I understand the reason that they all want to carry guns and knives: It is in their blood.*

*I hear Grandpa calling me so I must go now.*

*Love to all my people.*

*Chief Lady*

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