

CHAPTER 1

SHE EMBARRASSED ME

My heart raced, no matter how many times I told myself it was not a big deal. It was supposed to be a great day. I was supposed to be excited. It was the last Friday before Spring Break, and my favorite meal was being served for lunch. But I couldn't even bring myself to eat the pepperoni pizza. I felt full, although I hadn't eaten all day. And for some reason, my pizza just looked like cardboard.

"How many times have I told you guys how evil swine is?" Zolie chastised her friends as she sat down with them at the table.

I was happy that she didn't notice me sitting at the table next to them. She sat at the same table with her friends every day for lunch. I wasn't ready to approach her yet. I still had no clue what to say this time. I didn't

want this to be the third time she embarrassed me.

I couldn't believe I was considering approaching her again. I didn't have her number, and I definitely wouldn't ask for it. I could try to reach her through The App, but she'd probably screenshot it to prove how much of a stalker I was. I had to talk to her in person, even though I was terrified of being embarrassed again.

The first time she embarrassed me was after our basketball game against Prep. I was stunned after reading the last translation because it said something about the purest blue crystal. Right before the game started, Zolie walked into the gym, wearing what I believed was the purest blue crystal. She had once explained to me that the crystal was called a Lapis Lazuli. She explained it to me when I was barely listening to her. I can't even remember what she said about it. I was too busy trying to get the book that I had gotten from the Solar Calendar translated. I ignored her

once and she proved that she could ignore me forever.

To further break my concentration, Zolie sat on the first row. She and her friends watched as Kai shot unlimited threes into the basket. Kai hadn't too long bragged about how he was going to slaughter me on the court, but I couldn't bring myself to care.

For the better part of a year, I tried to translate the last clue that I had from the Solar Calendar. I knew from each adventure that I didn't have much time to use it, but I never knew which time would be my last. That desperation had me introduce the Solar Calendar to the self-centered kid named Kai.

We weren't a bad duo at first. His grandfather helped him translate the book from Arabic and in exchange, I let him use the Solar Calendar with me. It was great until I learned that the book was simply a fable. Some passed down story that may not even be true. I just knew that clue was a dead end, until I read

the last translation. It could all be a coincidence, but I wanted to follow every clue until I could follow no more.

Coach benched me after my fifth brick. I couldn't blame him. I had never missed that many baskets in a row, not even as a toddler. I really wanted to win. I needed to win so that I could wipe that smirk off Kai's face, but I just didn't want it bad enough. I didn't want anything more than I wanted to understand the Solar Calendar. I literally had magic in my hands that I didn't understand, and the rules said that I must see it through. I just had to follow every clue until the end.

Since Zolie didn't sit far from where I was benched, I tried to make eye contact with her. At first, I thought she just didn't notice. Now that she hadn't said a word to me in months, I'm pretty sure she was ignoring me then, too.

Coach had finally put me back in the game. I think he wanted me to redeem myself. So much for that. I was fast enough to hang with Kai, but he was too fluid. His passes and shots glided around me like ice. Every attempt was complete. It was embarrassing. It wouldn't be so bad if he didn't gloat. He made sure to wink, blow kisses, and nod to the girls seated on the front row after every shot he made. To make matters worse, he leapt over me right at the buzzer to make the last shot of the game.

"Hey, Demarco." He turned to face me as the visitor's bleachers went wild. "Maybe you should see if the Solar Calendar could help your game next time."

His team circled him right on time. I had never wanted to start a fight as bad as I did then. He knew it aggravated me that he never said my actual name. He knew how much I hated that he even knew about the Solar Calendar. And he knew how much his cockiness

annoyed me. He managed to do all three within a matter of seconds.

"To the locker rooms now," I heard Coach call. The team all walked toward the locker room, but I saw Zolie leaving with her friends. I had already lost the game; what could it hurt?

"Hey, Zolie." I caught up with them just before they reached the gym door. "Can I talk to you for a minute?"

All four girls stopped walking. Zolie was the last of them to turn around. She was the only one not smiling. She crossed her arms, then adjusted her shoulders. She sighed slowly before looking me up and down. I knew I was probably sweaty, but I couldn't have been dirty. I wasn't even close enough for her to smell me. I started to feel uneasy about her stare.

"No," she finally huffed.

It wasn't curt. It wasn't jolly. She held onto the

'n' sound like it was part of a song. Like she wanted to bury some hatred she had for me within my soul. It was more than attitude; it felt like disgust. I was appalled. What did I ever do to her? Her friends giggled in unison.

"Demarcus! After that game you played, you should have been the first one in the locker room."

Coach was furious.

The giggling turned into laughter as more students joined in. I rushed out of the gym.

"Man, I thought you skipped lunch or something." Joey took the seat next to me. His forehead wrinkled, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," I sighed. The horror of reliving that moment must have spread across my face.

Joey took a huge bite of his pizza. "Why are you sitting here?"

"Change of scenery, I guess."

"Yea, whatever."

Zolie ate her salad like she'd be in the lunchroom all day. She spent more time listening to her friends talk than eating.

"You gone eat that?"

"I'm not hungry." Before I could finish my sentence, Joey grabbed my slice of pizza and put it in his mouth. I didn't even care.

"Okay, give me your trash." One of Zolie's friend's stood to collect the finished trays. She was no longer blocking Zolie's view of me.

Zolie noticed me as soon as her friend walked away. She was still wearing the blue crystal around her neck. She always wore that crystal around her neck. She rolled her eyes so fast that I didn't think anyone noticed.

"Oh... that's why you're sitting here," Joey spat chunks of pizza as he talked.

"No, it's not," I protested.

"I'm going to go out on a limb and say...she

doesn't like you."

I knew he was right, but I wouldn't admit it. "I just need to talk to her for like five minutes, but thanks to you, she thinks I'm a stalker."

"I was just trying to help."

Joey was one of my closest friends, so it didn't take long before he realized that I tried to get an audience with Zolie. He caught me looking at her one time too many and swore that I had a crush on her.

"Why don't you send her one of those Valegrams," he suggested.

"I told you. I don't have a crush on her. Besides, those things are creepy."

It was close to Valentine's day. For \$3, anyone could send a rose and a note to anyone else in the school. It was a fundraiser for the senior class, and everyone loved them. Everyone except me. I had enough stupid ideas of where to put my below minimum wage

allowance, and buying an overpriced flower wasn't one of them. Especially for a girl that had a habit of dissing me.

"I'm sending one to Heather," Joey offered.

"Good for you."

That was the day of the Valegram deadline. Two days before the Valegrams would be delivered during third and fourth period. That was the only time Joey and I had ever uttered the V word, so I was in pure shock to hear rumors on the school bus later that week.

"Ay Demarcus, yo... I feel sorry for you."

I was confused. I took out my earbuds to hear what Keenan was saying. The bus hadn't even pulled off yet.

"For what?" A few weeks had passed since the loss against Prep. I had redeemed myself. My average improved with each game since. Besides, we hadn't won against Prep in over five years. Most people didn't let

that loss sit on my shoulders. Well, everyone except me.

“Did you know there were over 2,000 Valegrams sent throughout the school, and only one was rejected?”

I put my ear buds back in. Keenan was known to spread rumors, and this one sounded like it had nothing to do with me.

“No way... Demarcus was the one that got rejected?” I turned around to see who said that, just as everyone on the bus began to laugh.

“I didn’t send out no Valegrams,” I said. “Y’all got the wrong guy.” I took my seat on the bus just as it began to pull off. Out the window, I noticed a few of my classmates pointing at me and laughing.

“I’d deny it, too,” I heard Keenan say as I drowned their voices with the volume of my music.

By that evening, I found out what they were laughing about. Zolie had, in fact, rejected my Valegram. Only thing was, I wasn’t the one who sent it.

That thought frustrated me again. I turned to face Joey. He was gulping the last of his chocolate milk.

"I mean this sincerely. Never help me again."

"I'm telling you, Demarcus. She smiled when she saw that it was from you. I was in class, right next to her when she got it."

"How do you know it wasn't one of the other ten that she had gotten that day?"

Joey laughed. "Are you serious? It was the only one she sent back."

"Wow, Joey. Thanks a lot."

"First, she smiled, then she shook her head. It was like she changed her mind or something. That's when she said, 'Please, send this one back. I don't want it.'"

"I couldn't even tell people that it wasn't me that sent it. Who's going to believe that you sent it on my behalf?"

"It's good you didn't try that one, Demarcus, because I would have never confessed."

"Whatever, Joey. Just don't try to help me again."

"No problem." He burped. "Are you going to drink your milk?"

CHAPTER 2

GET MY SOLAR CALENDAR BACK

"I know it sounds strange, but I'm telling you, racism killed my grandma," Zolie explained.

I was desperately looking for a reason to talk to Zolie. There were only five minutes left for lunch, and it was getting harder to keep a conversation with Joey without him realizing that I was eavesdropping on Zolie.

"We can play after the break," Joey said.

I sipped from the water that I had Joey fetch for me after he had stolen all of my lunch. I looked him dead in his face, but my ears were focused on the girls. "That's cool," I uttered.

"Racism is mean, but it doesn't kill. It just kinda hurts your feelings," one of her friends responded.

"If my grandma was White, they would have paid more attention to her. They would have noticed

that they gave her the wrong dose. They would have listened when she complained. I know she would still be alive. I'm telling you guys. That's why I'm going to be a doctor."

"Didn't you say your grandma ate all those bad foods you tell us not to eat? Don't you always tell us that those foods will kill us? Are you sure it wasn't the poor lifestyle that did her in?" The girl did air quotes when she said *poor lifestyle*. Zolie must have said something like that before.

"Demarcus!" Joey said my name just a little too loud.

I stopped staring at the girls.

"Oh wow, I didn't notice you were sitting behind us, Demarcus." Apparently, Joey surprised the girls too. They were all looking at our table.

"These were the only available seats," Joey answered on my behalf. Didn't I just tell him not to help

me?

"I'm going to class," Zolie announced before standing.

I felt the Solar Calendar that was bunched in my pocket. I didn't know what to do. It was like I was losing my last chance. Maybe I could ask her after school before we got on the school buses.

"Are you sure?" one of the girls asked. "Your usual seats have been empty the entire lunch period."

"How do you know where we usually sit?" Joey smirked.

Zolie slowly began to walk away. "Zolie, wait!" I controlled my voice. I had to make sure I wasn't too loud. I also had to make sure that I didn't sound desperate. "I heard what you said about racism killing your grandma. I know exactly what you mean." I was winging it. I didn't know what to say. It was hard to be careful in a hurry.

She turned to face me. Her face looked confused before turning skeptical. She realized that I had eavesdropped.

"I told you he was a stalker," one of the girls whispered behind me.

"He's not a stalker, he just likes her," another one said.

I turned around as the girls giggled. They were always giggling. "I don't like her," I seethed.

"Well, that's settled," the last girl perked.

I turned back to Zolie and realized that she was storming out of the cafeteria. The bell rang at the worst possible time as more students polluted my path to her.

I slipped the Solar Calendar out of my pocket as I double-timed through the crowd. I was moving entirely too fast. I caught up with her in the most embarrassing way possible. I tripped on her heel sending us both tumbling to the ground. To add insult

to injury, the Solar Calendar fell on her face.

“What’s your problem, Demarcus?” She sat up, gripping the Solar Calendar in her hand. “You insult me, then knock me down and hit me in the face with a rock?”

We were now both on our feet. A small crowd began to gather. My heart was a tortoise earlier, compared to how it felt now. Now, it was definitely a hare. I don’t think my heart beat this fast when I did suicide drills in the gym.

I glanced at the Solar Calendar in her hand. I don’t even think she realized she was holding it. Her eyes had to have been turning red. Her stare was burning a hole in my face. The crowd was growing. It was like everyone forgot that we had to get to class.

“What. Is. Your. Problem?” Each word was louder than the one before it.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to trip you. You left

before we could finish our conversation.”

“Listen to me carefully.” With every vowel, she inched closer. “Never. Speak to me. Again.”

She turned around so fast that her hair flung in my face. The crowd finally began to disperse, but not before they all made eye contact with me in extreme laughter. I didn’t think I would ever recover from this.

“Dang, Demarcus.” Joey walked up to me. He sighed and shook his head. He didn’t have to say anything. I knew exactly what he was thinking. Just when I thought I could be embarrassed no further.

I sighed and shook my head, too. I rubbed my hands down my shirt. When I reached my pocket, I realized that it was empty. “The Solar Calendar.”

“What?”

I left Joey and walked quickly down the hall toward Zolie. I spotted her when she seemed to realize what was in her hand. I looked long enough to see her

face mangle in disgust.

“Before you say anything. I just want to get my Solar Calendar back.”

Her mangled face didn’t change when her eyes met mine. I walked slowly toward her, raising my hands in surrender.

“This rock?” she asked. “The rock you threw at me?”

“It’s not a rock. It’s an ancient, sacred item.” I crept closer to her, happy to notice that the students didn’t slow down to watch us. Clearly, most of them didn’t see what happened down the other hallway.

She turned the rock around in her hand, inspecting it. “This dirty thing?”

“Please, just give it to me.”

“Don’t listen to him, Zolie. He’s trying to embarrass you again.” Apparently, her friends caught up. I didn’t turn to look at them. I wouldn’t dare take

my eyes off the Solar Calendar.

"Wait, did she say I was embarrassing you?"

These girls were psycho.

Zolie didn't respond. Something different happened with her face. She looked from me to the Solar Calendar with a sneaky grin.

"You really like this thing, huh?" She must have seen the desperation on my face.

"I mean..." I fumbled thoughts around in my head, "it's an heirloom. It's special to me. And. And," I stuttered, "I didn't throw it at you. It came out of my hand when we fell."

"Heirloom? You said it was sacred."

"Sacred may not have been the best word."

"And ancient. You also said ancient."

"Zolie, class is about to start. I promise I'll never talk to you again. Just hand it over. My dad will kill me if it's missing." I tried my best attempt at puppy dog

eyes. Maybe with the threat of me getting in trouble, she would yield. She'd see my desperation as fear. I followed up with slouched shoulders and added, "my dad gets really mean when he's upset." I wasn't sure if she was buying it.

The bell rang again.

"Zolie, we're not leaving you alone with that creep."

I couldn't help but turn around on that one.
"Creep? Really?"

"Tell me what you were saying about my grandma."

I turned back to face Zolie. I searched my brain for what she was talking about. Was she really going to hold the Solar Calendar hostage with a conversation? I needed to get to class. The online search didn't help, but surely I could learn about crystals from someone else.

"Your grandma?" I questioned slowly. I knew

the wrong tone could set her off, although I had no clue which tone was right.

"In the cafeteria. When I said racism killed my grandma. None of my friends believe me. Everyone I tell that to thinks it's stupid." She moved the Solar Calendar behind her while she talked. She was getting way too comfortable with it. "I don't know. Maybe it is stupid. I mean, she did have a poor diet. She was the only one in my family that still ate pork. She even ate cheese and drank cow's milk. Eww."

I wasn't sure why she was bashing my favorite foods, but I tried to stay on topic. This was not the time to anger her again.

"Oh, yes. I know way too much about racism. I mean way too much. More than I ever wanted to know." I blew out air and shook my head. I rested one hand on top of my head and the other on my hip. Then I nodded.

"So, you know what I mean, right?"

I looked in her eyes. She was serious. This had to be the chance that I was looking for. I stood up straight. "You said you wanted to be a doctor?"

"Yeah. I do. I've seen the bad side of health and I hate it so much. My mom says instead of complaining, I should do something about it. I want to help someone else's grandma, you know?"

"Are you really passionate about being a doctor?"

"Zolie, you're going to make us late." All three of the girls were still standing behind us. They were like piranhas. All of them. They refused to let anything good happen around them.

"What if you could like... meet a doctor? Someone who could answer all the questions you could ever have about medicine and health."

Her face was confused again. I could see that I was losing her. This may be the only time I got to talk to

Zolie alone. I was going all in.

"You wear that purest, blue crystal. I know that it must be sacred to you, like the Solar Calendar is to me."

She pulled the Solar Calendar from her back.
She looked at it.

"If I can. If it works. If you want to. I want you to meet an ancient doctor. An ancient healer. I mean... there has to be one somewhere in history, right?" I chuckled. I wasn't sure if I sounded like a babbling idiot.

"Ancient healers were so much better than current doctors. They actually listened to what ails our bodies and found a way to work with nature to heal it. Doctors now throw chemicals at our problems. Yes, it's a quick fix, but it has lasting effects. Negative effects."

I had no clue what she was talking about, but I had to keep her talking. I had to keep her interested. I took a deep breath. Here came embarrassment number

four.

"Let's use the Solar Calendar and find one of those ancient doctors that would be happy to help you with all of your questions." I reached my hand toward the Solar Calendar. I looked at it, resting in her grasp, and I nodded toward my hand.

"What?" Her face was turning into super mean Zolie. I could just feel one of her friends coming to mess everything up.

"Please. Trust me. Let's meet your ancient doctor."

With brows still furrowed, she extended the Solar Calendar to me. "Let's meet my ancient doctor." I caught a glimpse of her smile before the bright light blinded me.

CHAPTER 3

IT IS A POWERFUL TOOL

It worked. It really worked. I couldn't make the smile disappear from my face. I guess I should've known that it would work. I hadn't tried to use it since that dreadful day, before I played the basketball game against Kai. Okay. Now wasn't the time to lose focus. I needed answers immediately.

"Demarcus. What is this?" Zolie questioned me in what I could only guess was calmed fright.

"This," I reassured her, "is what I wanted to show you. "This is where we meet the ancient doctor."

From the words written on the walls, I knew that we must have been in Egypt. It was the only place I'd visited with columns that seemed to reach the sky, decorated in hieroglyphs. Or what I knew now as the Medu Neter.

“I really didn’t know what you were talking about. Where are we? Is this real?” Zolie closed her eyes tightly, then reopened them. She did this several times. Each time, her lips began to tremble more. “Weren’t we just in the hallway at school?”

I reached for her hand. “Zolie. Please, trust me. This will not take long. You are safe.”

The expression on her face said that she didn’t know if she should believe me. She looked down at the hand I was holding. I didn’t want to upset her further. I let go.

“Ah! Zolie. I’m so glad that you are here.”

We turned to find a bald man approaching us. Zolie quickly stepped behind me.

“Tell her. Don’t be afraid.” The man stopped directly in front of me. The broad collar he wore glistened from the sunlight that shined throughout the huge building. He looked much older than my father,

yet he had no wrinkles. We shared the same skin tone, but he stood at least a foot taller than me; still short for an adult.

"They call me, Imhotep. My name means, one who comes in peace."

My eyes grew wide. I had heard of Imhotep. It was almost impossible to do ancient Egyptian history without coming across his name several times. He was the one many called the first multi-genius. I extended my hand to him.

"Really... You're Imhotep."

He smiled as he shook my hand.

Zolie slowly came to stand next to me. "What's going on, Demarcus? You know him?"

"He has to be the one you summoned." I looked at her, my smile still painted across my face. I could see her trying to understand. Trying to make sense of the impossible.

“What do you mean, I summoned him?”

“The Solar Calendar,” I replied.

“It is a powerful tool,” Imhotep spoke before I could say anything else. “It is very quick. So fast, it’s like it doesn’t really happen. I’ve seen much, but I am often surprised of its power myself.”

“That dirty rag? It brought us here. Are you real?” Zolie touched Imhotep on his shoulder, then immediately jumped back. It was like she didn’t realize what she was doing. Realizing that she could touch him scared her.

“Yes.” Imhotep’s focus was so intense. He looked deeply into her eyes. His entire face smiled. Like he was fully invested in every word he said. “I am real.” He turned to look at me. “For now, anyway.” His smile broadened.

I think that was his attempt at making a joke. I laughed. Just a little. Enough to join the joke, but not too

much that I couldn't take it back if needed.

"Demarcus. You are witty. Relax."

I did as he said. I relaxed my shoulders. I nodded and smiled. I turned to Zolie. "This will only last a few moments. You have an ancient doctor here. Ask him anything. He will help you if he can."

Zolie still looked unsure.

"Mr. Imhotep, I see that we're in ancient Egypt." I smiled. "Or ancient Kemet. How ancient are you?"

It didn't take long for him to understand the question. I almost didn't notice the brief confusion before he spoke.

"I came to be about 4,000 years ago. In your modern calculation, that should be over 2600 years before the new calendar."

"2600 BCE. Right?"

"Yes."

"How is that possible?" Zolie asked.

I ignored her question since I had already answered it several times. Our time was better spent with her seeing the Solar Calendar in action.

"Tell us more about you. You have to be an ancient doctor, amongst many things. Right?"

"I held many titles. Architect, as I designed the step pyramid at the funerary compound in Saqqara." Imhotep turned to seemingly show us something that wasn't there.

When he completed his rotation, the columns had disappeared and we were now standing within a colossal courtyard. Before us stood a huge, six step pyramid. It was in perfect condition with squared corners and in a solid, light grayish tone. When I turned to look behind us, the courtyard was now in ruins.

"Of course, you will recognize it like this," Imhotep stated.

I turned back around to face the stepped

structure to see that it was also in ruins. Imhotep was right. I was more familiar with the ruined version.

“Wow.” Zolie looked around the courtyard in amazement.

“I am known for being a scribe,” Imhotep added.

The courtyard was replaced by a room filled with tables made from stone. Several men who looked very similar to Imhotep, with bald heads and broad collars, leaned over the tables. They seemed to be writing on ancient scrolls. I felt Zolie move closer to me.

“Oh, they can’t see you or touch you, like he can,” I said to her. “It’s like a movie.”

“What are they doing?” Zolie asked slowly. She said it like she wasn’t sure if it was okay for her to ask questions.

Imhotep looked at each of us carefully. A slow smile spread across his face. “They are writing.”

Zolie looked like she wanted to say something else, but Imhotep spoke before she could.

“I know how much you write now in your times. It is a task for you all, but everyone didn’t need to write during my times.”

Imhotep walked toward one of the tables. I caught Zolie’s eye and nodded toward Imhotep, letting her know it was okay for us to follow him, which we did.

“Things worth writing were laws, spells, inventory, court proceedings.” He paused. He turned to look at us to make sure we were following him, physically and mentally.

“Yes. I remember Ramessu stating that he would need a scribe to record important dates,” I added.

“Yes.” He nodded, “And some things I think are of particular interest to you are prescriptions and medical treatments.”

He turned to look at the papyrus that lay on the table in front of him. I looked at Zolie to make sure she was watching, too. She seemed calmer now.

The Papyrus had words that I, of course, didn't understand. They were written in some form of hieroglyphics. The text was in both black and red. This reminded me of the Papyrus of Ani in ancient Egypt, or the new testament in the bible.

"You call this now, the Ebers Papyrus. Somehow, you name our texts by vigilantes and looters, but either way, you have this. Something you can explore on your electronic tablets at home."

"What exactly is it?" Zolie asked.
"It is a medical papyri. One that contains over 700 magical formulas and remedies for all kinds of illnesses. This is something we passed down, so that we can do the work of healing."

"And you say this is 4,000 years ago?" she

asked.

"Yes. Just about. We find that it is best to give you information that you can actually research yourself. It does not help for me to tell you of all the things that you will never find. All of the things that are now destroyed, even though I personally believe those things are much more useful."

"I've been doing this for a while, Imhotep," I interjected. "I will say that it's hard for me to get people to believe in the power of the Solar Calendar if they do not learn of information that they can easily research. They usually think I just made it up. And when there's no way for me to prove it to them, it kinda looks like I did."

"Very well then," he replied. "I will not waste time showing you surgery and things of that nature. Let us focus on your interests."

I glanced at Zolie. She did not seem like she had

any questions, so I asked, “I remember reading that you were deified. Like they saw you as a god many years after your death. Do you know about that?”

“Of course, I do. As with everyone else you meet, I am connected to the Solar Calendar, too. We share an energy source. Our lineage brings us great knowledge.”

“There’s an oath they say that doctors take,” I added.

“Isn’t that a Hippocratic oath?” Zolie chimed in.

“Thank you, Zolie,” I added. “That is exactly where I was going. A lot of the men that are considered great in our teachings were actually Greek men who learned from Egypt.”

Imhotep relaxed. “I see where you are going with this, Demarcus. Yes. Men of medicine who followed my teaching eventually created a group. A following. Many considered me the god of medicine.

They took that knowledge to Greece, as in many other places, where they called my name and following, Asclepius.”

“I think I’ve heard that saying with the oath,” she said. “Funny, I would never have known that you were the father of medicine. I thought its history only led to Greece.”

“Yes. And through all of the distortion, I am happy to have contributed.” He beamed.

“So, did your work help anyone else or just Greece? Surely that was thousands of years ago, but where are those ancient remedies now?” Zolie asked. I was happy that she was finally getting involved.

“Everywhere. There were medicine men, healers, crafters all over the world. We shared knowledge for ailments.”

“But I bet things were much more natural then,” Zolie accused. “Now, we just pump our bodies full of

chemicals at the first sign of sickness. There's a vaccine for everything now. We're all being forced to pump chemicals into our bodies."

Imhotep smiled. "I understand your frustration. Let's try a more recent approach."

When Imhotep turned away from us, the ancient room was gone.