

Amaya Campbell

Professor Stubbs

ENG 201

2/9/23

Summary of *Tale of Two Brothers*

The Egyptian folk story, *Tale of Two Brothers*, despite the title at its core does not center around the brotherly bond between siblings, rather the intersections between revenge and success. The readers are introduced to the two brothers in an atypical relationship. Bata lives with Anubis, his older brother, and Anubis' wife, seeing both as parental figures he must obey doing yard work with his unnatural strength. One day while Bata was doing his work, Anubis's wife tries to seduce Bata, but he refuses while also promising he "will not cause it to go forth from [his] mouth to any people"(Orbiney, 6). The scornful wife makes herself ill and forges a beating lying to her husband that Bata raped her, fully breaking the trust between the siblings when Anubis believes her and attempts to murder Bata. Just in time the lead cow directs Bata to flee his home to stay alive with the god Re-Harakhti separating the two with a line of crocodiles. Though he is able to prove his innocence to Anubis, he doesn't accept Anubis's apology and goes back home. This is when I would say Bata's revenge plot starts because he could've forgiven Anubis and live life normally again, but if he went back revenge wouldn't have been served for Anubis or his wife. Instead, he goes onward to the Valley of Pine to meet the nine gods and live in harmony for a while. At the Valley of the Pine, Bata lives on the land creating his own home as he wants, for the first time not needing to obey any orders. Seeing this the gods blessing him with a wife "more beautiful of body than any other woman...the fluid of every god in her being," to be by his side (Orbiney, 8). Unfortunately, the pair turns into a really toxic relationship with Bata

restricting his wife's freedom while also putting too much trust into her, telling her basically the steps on how to kill him. Eventually, Bata's wife becomes stir crazy being forced to stay inside, wanting to go to the pharaoh because of the promised glitz and glam, so she sneaks out and has the tide sweep her into the water. Her scent being very prominent causes the pharaoh to search and find her, making her his wife. Now that the wife has some control over her husband, she slyly tells him to chop the great pine, killing Bata. Around the same time, Anubis gets the beer and wine hints from Bata to find him in the Valley of Pine, and after he is resurrected he devises a plan to seek revenge on his wife. Though at first the plan as Bata disguised as a bull falls through when his wife tricks the pharaoh into slaying the bull so she can eat the liver, he comes back stronger by reincarnating as his wife's child, becoming the crowned prince over the land and eventually the new pharaoh with his brother by his side. Honestly, someone could argue that Bata's actions were wrong and that he should've just forgiven Anubis at the beginning, but it's very impressive that he was able to be very successful at the end by never attacking anyone that hurt him. This story really shows that sometimes the best revenge is never stooping down to someone's level.