



Her master ordered a pair of dainty slippers made especially for Rhodopis. The soles were of real leather, and the toes were gilded with rose-red gold. Now when Rhodopis danced, her feet sparkled like fireflies.

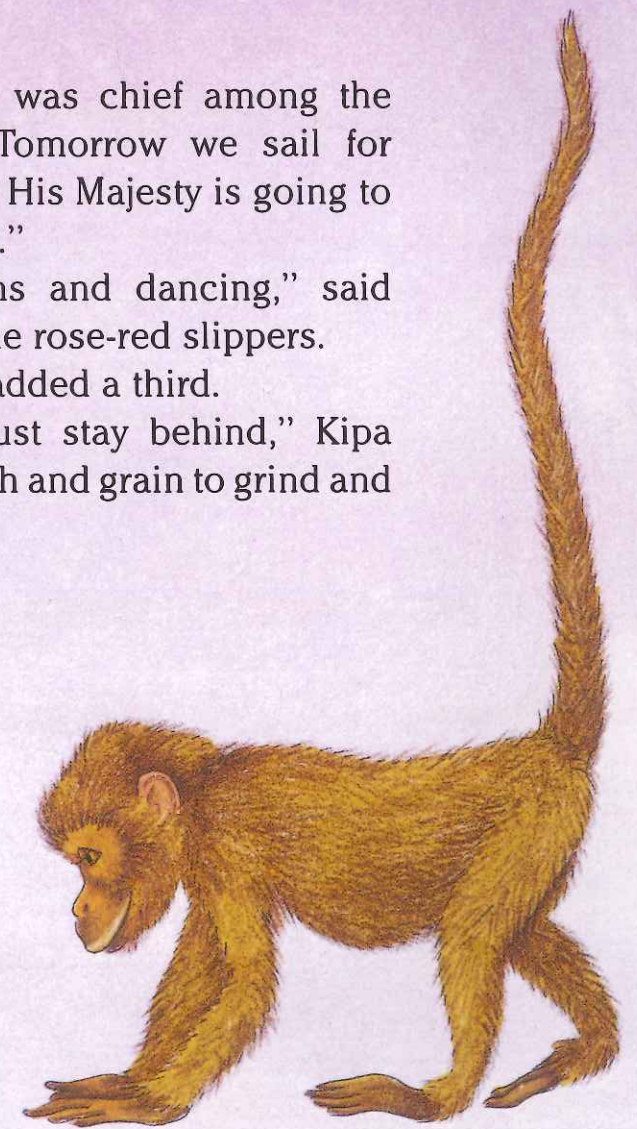
The rose-red slippers set Rhodopis more apart than ever. The Egyptian servant girls were jealous, for they wore clumsy sandals woven from papyrus. Out of spite they found new tasks for her to do, keeping Rhodopis so busy that she was too tired to dance at night.

One evening, Kipa, who was chief among the servant girls, announced, "Tomorrow we sail for Memphis to see the Pharaoh. His Majesty is going to hold court for all his subjects."

"There will be musicians and dancing," said another servant girl, eyeing the rose-red slippers.

"There will be feasting," added a third.

"Poor Rhodopis! You must stay behind," Kipa jeered. "You have linen to wash and grain to grind and the garden to weed."



The next morning, just as Ra the Sun was climbing into the sky, Rhodopis followed the servant girls to the riverbank. Kipa wore a necklace of blue beads. Bracelets jingled on the wrists of the second. The third had tied a many-colored sash about her waist. Although Rhodopis wore a plain tunic, on her feet were the rose-red slippers. Perhaps they will let me come along to see the Pharaoh after all, she thought. But the three servant girls poled their raft around the bend in the river without giving Rhodopis a backward glance.

Rhodopis sighed, and turned to the basket piled high with dirty clothes. "Wash the linen, weed the garden, grind the grain." She slapped the wooden paddle against the cloth in time to her song.

The hippopotamus, tired of so dull a tune, pushed out of the reeds and splashed into the river.

"Shame!" cried Rhodopis, shaking her paddle. "You splattered mud on my beautiful slippers!"

