

# THE EGYPTIAN CINDERELLA

by Shirley Climo • illustrated by Ruth Heller



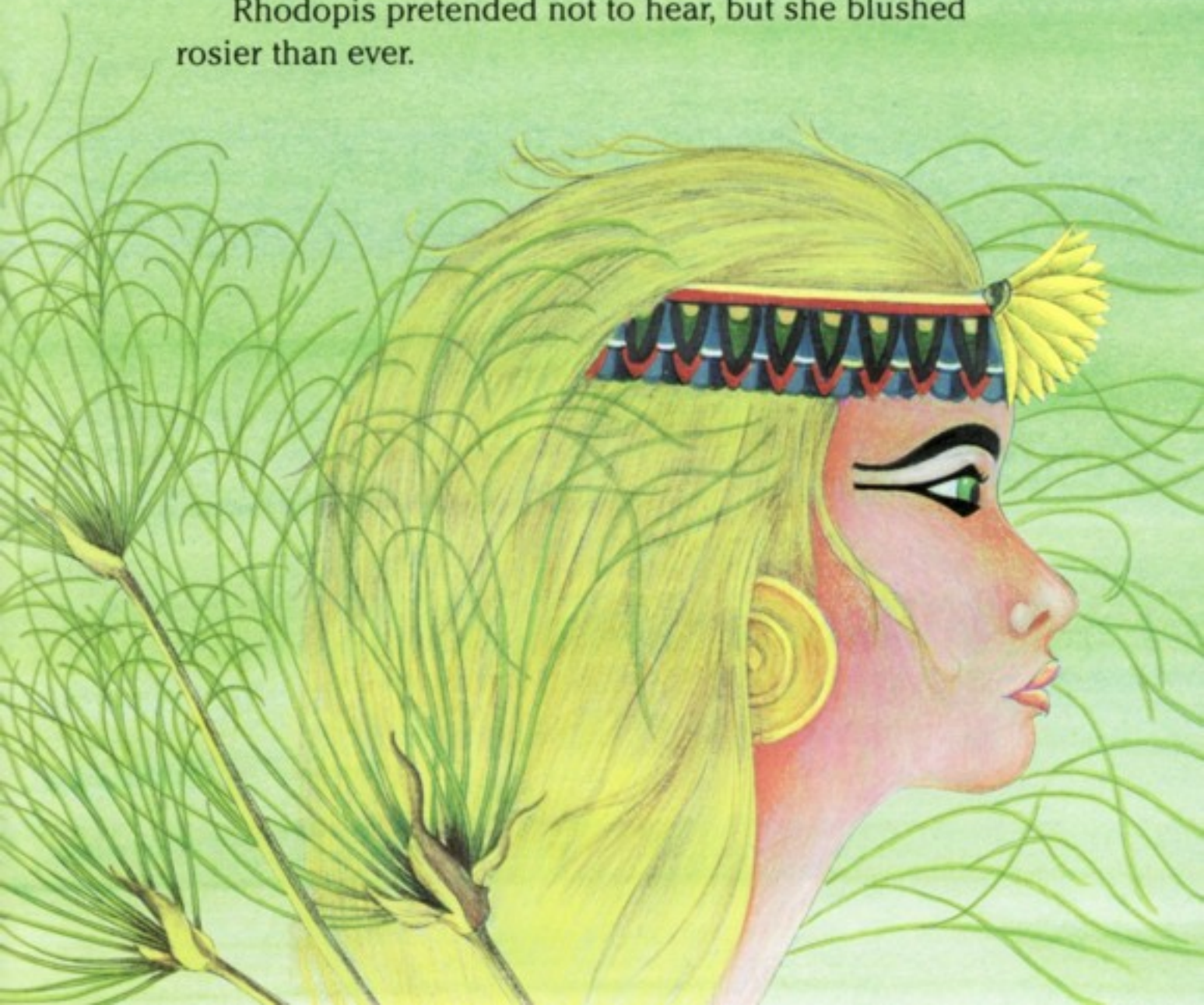
Long ago, in the land of Egypt, where the green Nile River widens to meet the blue sea, there lived a maiden called Rhodopis. When she was still a small child, Rhodopis had been stolen by pirates. She was snatched from her home in Greece, taken across the sea to Egypt, and there sold as a slave.



Like the Egyptian servant girls, Rhodopis went to the water's edge each day to wash clothes or to gather the reeds that grew along the riverbank. But Rhodopis looked different from the Egyptian girls. Their eyes were brown and hers were green. Their hair hung straight to their shoulders, while the breeze blew hers into tangles. Their skin glowed like copper, but her pale skin burned red beneath the sun. That was how she got her name, for Rhodopis meant "rosy-cheeked" in Greek.

"Rosy Rhodopis!" scoffed the servant girls, hissing her name between their teeth.

Rhodopis pretended not to hear, but she blushed rosier than ever.





Although her master was kind, he was old and liked to doze beneath a fig tree. He seldom heard the servant girls tease Rhodopis. He never saw them ordering her about.

“Hurry, Rhodopis!” they would shout at her. “The geese are in the garden, eating up the onions!”

“Mend my robe!”

“I’m hungry, Rhodopis! Bake the bread!”

Rhodopis always hurried to do their bidding, for the Egyptian girls were household servants and she was only a slave.

# THE EGYPTIAN CINDERELLA

Poor Rhodopis! She has nothing—no mother or father, and no friends. She is a slave, from the far-off country of Greece. Only the beautiful rose-red slippers her master gives her can make Rhodopis smile. So when a falcon swoops down and snatches one of the slippers away, Rhodopis is heartbroken. For how is she to know that the slipper will land in the lap of the great Pharaoh himself? And who would ever guess that the Pharaoh has promised to find the slipper's owner and make her queen of all Egypt?

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**Shirley Climo** is the author of *THE COBWEB CHRISTMAS* and *KING OF THE BIRDS*, both available from Harper Trophy. **Ruth Heller** is also the illustrator of *KING OF THE BIRDS*.

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