

Information obtained from Dr Ali Kafour, curator at the Egyptian Museum:

THE CARLYLE EXPEDITION: Dr. Kafour believes that the Carlyle Expedition uncovered a secret pertaining to the Black Pharaoh, and that the discovery somehow led to their slaughter in Kenya. Sir Aubrey Penhew had long studied the Black Pharaoh, and Kafour and Penhew had several times discussed the topic and traded information about that subtle presence. When last he came to Egypt, Sir Aubrey did not seek out Kafour. When Kafour visited the expedition dig near Dhashur, Sir Aubrey rudely rebuffed the doctor. Kafour vividly recalls marked changes in Sir Aubrey—physically the man seemed younger, and emotionally he was withdrawn, aloof, and curiously malicious.

THE BLACK PHARAOH IN HISTORY: at the end of the Third Dynasty a man known as Nephren-Ka came to Egypt. Nephren-Ka was a powerful sorcerer; he brought madness and death to his enemies at the flick of a finger. The stories say that he came from an ancient city in the deserts of Arabia, whose name was Irem, the City of Pillars. This place is mentioned in Al Azif. All who knew of it held it in dread. Nephren-Ka revived the worship of an old, foul god the Black Pharaoh. Soon Nephren-Ka and that god were interchangeable in the minds of the people, and the sorcerer became known as the Black Pharaoh. Now no one can distinguish their deeds and legends.

For many years the Black Pharaoh fought with Zoser's successors of the Third Dynasty for control of the land. So great was the power of the Black Pharaoh that no record of them now remains. For a time, Nephren-Ka ruled the Nile and its peoples. At last Sneferu arose, and founded the Fourth Dynasty, and with the aid of the goddess Isis thwarted the evil magic and slew Nephren-Ka.

Remarkably, however, a pyramid was built to contain the sorcerer's body. Kafour speculates that this perhaps insulated Egypt from still potent magic within the corpse but this structure collapsed even while Sneferu was building a second. The Collapsed Pyramid is at Meidum; the second pyramid is the Bent Pyramid at Dhashur. Records imply that Nephren-Ka's corpse was removed from Meidum and placed within the Bent Pyramid, but exploration of the site has discovered no trace. Another pyramid at Dhashur, the Red Pyramid, is also attributed to Sneferu; this pyramid is said to guard Dhashur, lest Nephren-Ka rise from the dead.

Upon his triumph, Sneferu ordered all traces of the Black Pharaoh stricken from the land. Nevertheless, worshipers of the Black Pharaoh remained, and schemed for the evil one's return. In time, the worshipers were driven south, out of Egypt and into the hideous swamps beyond the Sudan. In the Sixth Dynasty, the cruel Queen Nitocris was thought in league with a new cult of the Black Pharaoh; though the proof of this is subjective, Dr. Kafour believes it to be true. He holds that the Black Pharaoh and Nephren-Ka existed, as yet do the pantheon of gods of which the Black Pharaoh was a part. He calls these entities the Elder Gods, and says they are led by the demon sultan Azathoth.

QUEEN NITOCRIS: the unidentified mummy recently stolen from the Clive Expedition at Giza undoubtedly was the remains of that beautiful and evil ruler. She had been buried alive, but no trace was found until the Clive Expedition uncovered the secret room in the smallest of the Great Pyramids. How or why she was stolen he does not know, but he thinks that the theft relates to the prophesied return of the Black Pharaoh.