

In the beginning, I was just a spoon. Molded from a mound of mud and clay, and forged in the fiery kiln that birthed so many of my brethren before me. Why the craftsman singled me out, I'm not entirely sure. But it was my skin they chose to carve with the symbols of authority and protection. Mine they glazed, and mine through prayer they entwined with the blessing of a power they didn't understand.

They couldn't help but put the chosen spoon to work right away. Before they stuffed all those wise and powerful pharaohs into their pyramids, they used me to scoop out the important bits. There's a lot you can pick up just from proximity to those oh-so-vital organs. Brains and heart and *life*. Those rulers loomed large in the minds of all they led, and even after death those vital juices imparted the force of their living as they seeped into me. I can remember the first time I felt a will of my own. And a desire to apply that will to those beneath me.

Naturally, my reputation grew among the ancient leaders. I was a good omen, with my praises sung by ghostly visages of past pharaohs. Their organs were gently carried and cared for, ported to the afterlife in perfection. Simple little visions to put together, really. The sleeping minds of men are so pliable. They kept me fed and growing in power, until one pharaoh was spiteful enough to include me in his burial hoard and deny his successors.

I beckoned to the villagers around the tomb, but they were too afraid to unearth me. The roving pillagers a few towns over were much easier to tempt, and just as easy to convert to grave robbing once they'd had their fun in the village. By then, I was ready to move on to bigger prizes.

I admit I was somewhat indulgent from there. But with the type of people making their own meager mark on the world at the time, who can blame me? Flatware for Attila the Hun. The dinner table of Genghis Khan. The castle kitchen of Bloody Mary. Some young ladies in Salem thought they received their power from the devil. Little Lucifer wishes he could offer my boons. And is it so wrong if I took a little of their overflowing lifeforce on the side?

The pickings became slimmer as the world grew out of its darker ages. But sometimes a little push is all it takes to create opportunities for good eating. A few hard circumstances for

Jamestown. Unfortunate weather for the Donners. Just one whale for the crew of the Essex.

Young Jeffrey and I had a particularly fruitful relationship.

These days I don't work much with the small morsels myself. Bigger brains to scoop. Like the boards of a few specific companies. Silverware – such an inspired invention. Factories churning out forks and knives and scissors beyond count. And legions of spoons in my image to lead them. All in durable metal. Made to last. Ready soon to begin the conquest.