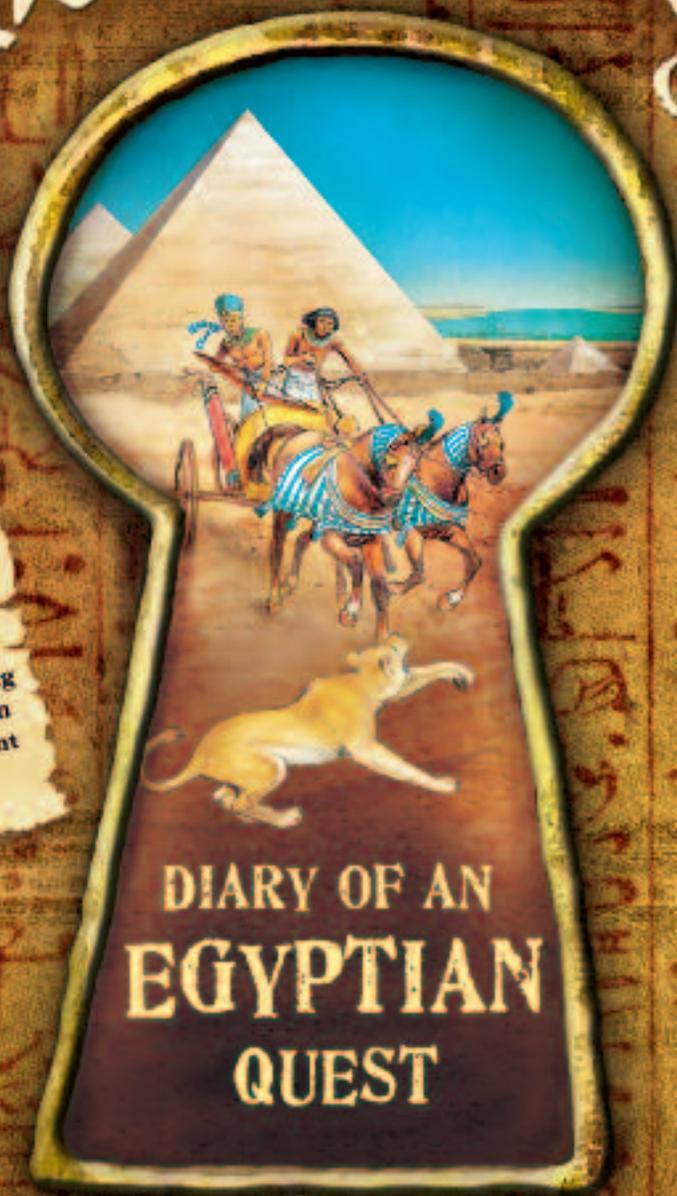


The Time Key



Take an exciting
journey back in
time to Ancient
Egypt!

DIARY OF AN
EGYPTIAN
QUEST

The Time Key

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EGYPTIAN
QUEST



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The Time Key

DIARY OF AN EGYPTIAN QUEST

Dear Reader,

Can you imagine what it would be like to know that someone really important and powerful was out to get you? That your lives were actually in real danger?? What a NIGHTMARE!!! That's exactly what happened to us. But we weren't really scared—well, not all the time ... That's because we were in Ancient Egypt and everything was SO cool and different and REALLY EXCITING we didn't actually stop to think about it!

Yes, that's right. Ancient Egypt. You see, we went on this INCREDIBLE journey back through time. You don't believe us? After you've read this diary and seen the things we picked up, we're sure you'll change your mind. And maybe you'll discover what it was REALLY like to find yourself in a MUMMY'S TOMB at the time of the PHAROHS!

Josh and Maisie



 Orpheus

“Take a look at this, Maisie!”
 Josh had just made a pyramid
 out of card. We were REALLY
 interested in the pyramids.
 Granddad said he had loads of
 books about them in his study,
 so we went to take a
 look.



There was a lot of other
 amazing stuff about
 mummies in the book. As we
 read, we thought we heard
 noises of people talking and
 some weird animal noises
 coming from behind the
 bookcase. Hmm ... very strange!
 Through the space where the book had once been we



could see a small door at the back of
 the book case. We cleared some more
 books off the shelf. There was a key
 in the lock. I reached through and
 turned it. The noises became much
 louder. Now we just HAD to go and
 see what was going on ...



While we were
 looking, a strange
 thing happened. A
 book fell out of the
 bookcase all by itself.
 It was an old book
 about—guess what?—
 ancient Egypt! A page
 had come loose in the fall.
 On it there was a picture
 of a man. Not a pharaoh,
 but one of his close advisors,
 the Vizier of Egypt. It turns
 out he was a crook: he plotted
 to rob a pharaoh's tomb!

“Hey, look at you Maisie!”
 “Where's your shirt gone
 Josh?”. We giggled at one
 another's outfits. That
 chattering and bellowing
 were now very close by.
 Where were we?

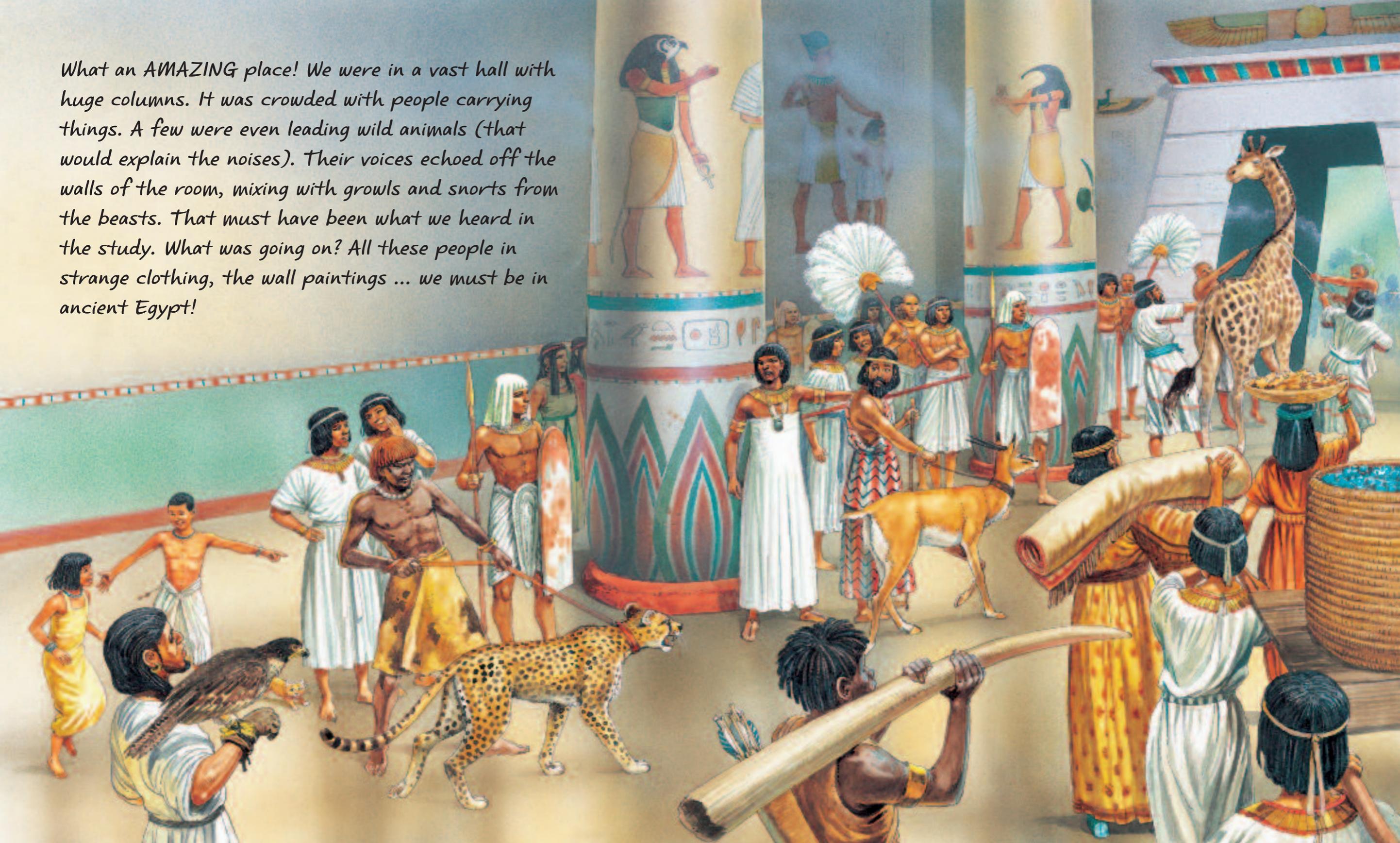


TOMB ROBBERIES
 AN AUDACIOUS PLOT to seize treasures buried in the
 tomb of a pharaoh of the 18th dynasty (1540–1319 BC)
 has recently been discovered. Some men, believed to be
 among the tomb burial party itself, were arrested soon after
 the tomb was sealed, having been caught in the act by the
 pharaoh's guards. It is thought that thefts of this kind were
 not uncommon in ancient Egyptian times. The workmen
 would have been well aware of the presence of gold,
 jewellery, amulets, furniture and other priceless artefacts in
 the tomb. What makes this case unusual is the possible
 involvement of a senior member of government, thought to
 be no less a figure than one of the two Viziers of Egypt, in
 the planning of this robbery. Papyrus documents have come
 to light giving details of the workmen's confessions,
 implicating the Vizier. However, it is not known how the
 details of the plot were uncovered, prompting his arrest.



Fig 1. One of Viziers of Egypt in the 18th Dynasty, thought
 to have plotted to rob a pharaoh's tomb.

What an AMAZING place! We were in a vast hall with huge columns. It was crowded with people carrying things. A few were even leading wild animals (that would explain the noises). Their voices echoed off the walls of the room, mixing with growls and snorts from the beasts. That must have been what we heard in the study. What was going on? All these people in strange clothing, the wall paintings ... we must be in ancient Egypt!



ANCIENT EGYPT

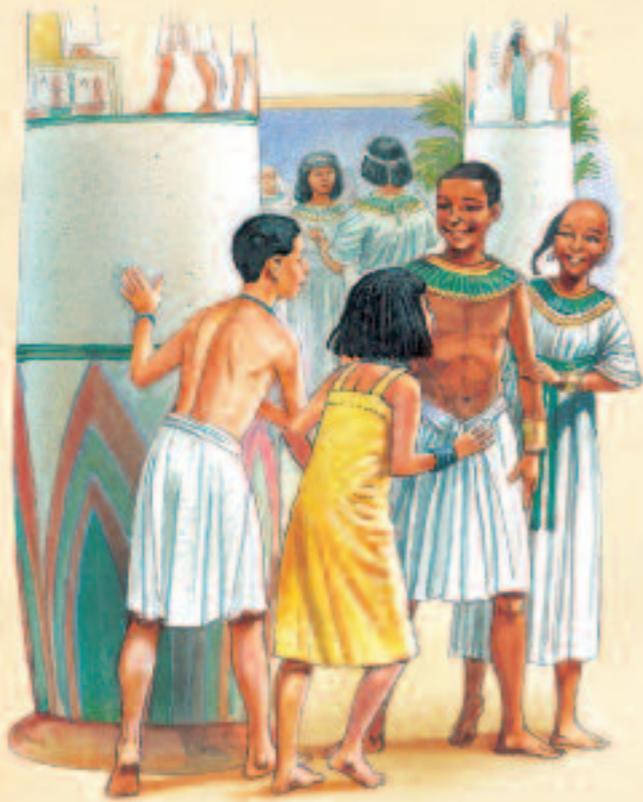
The river Nile was essential to the lives of Egyptians in ancient times. The soil on its bank was fertile and well watered—ideal for farming and raising cattle. Fishermen, bird-catchers and huntsmen all made use of the Nile's abundant wildlife. Papyrus, a tall

reed that grew in the Nile marshlands, had many uses: making boats, matting, utensils and paper. The Nile flooded between July and November, spreading fertile mud and silt over its banks. A network of channels carried the floodwaters to the fields.

About 5000 years ago, Egypt was made up of several independent kingdoms. These then came under the rule of a single king, whose title was pharaoh. The pharaohs ruled Egypt for the next 3000 years. The Old Kingdom began in about 2600 BC. It was the

age of pyramid-building. Next came the Middle Kingdom (2040-1650 BC). The New Kingdom (1540-1070 BC) was the time of temple-building, the Valley of the Kings tombs, Tutankhamun and the reigns of powerful pharaohs such as Rameses II.



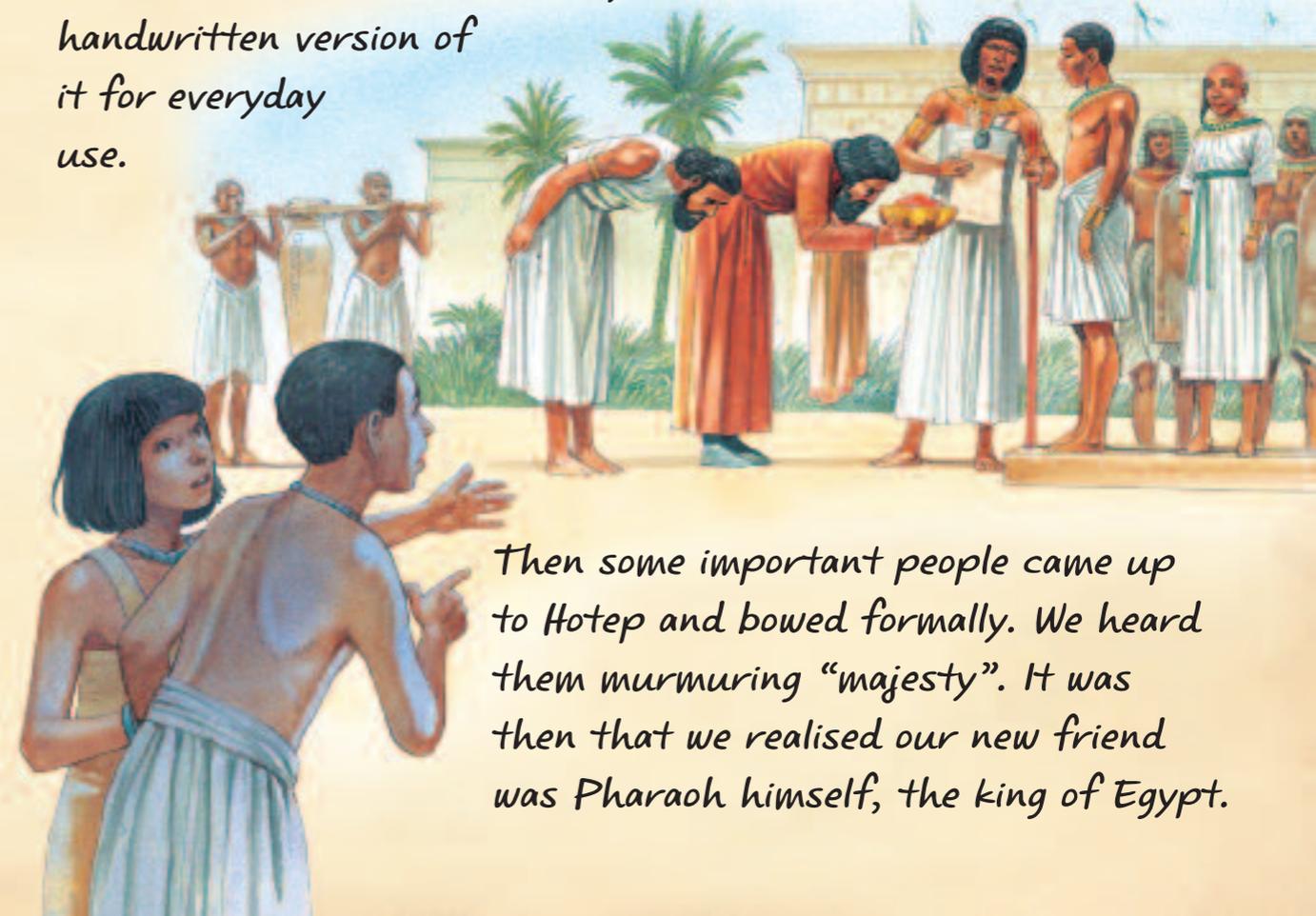


This was AWESOME! We hid behind one of the columns. How did we get here? What if we were spotted? Hey, maybe now we'd get to see the REAL pyramids! Just then a boy and a girl, just a little older than we are, popped their heads round the column. They gave us friendly, welcoming smiles. "Hi!" said the boy. "I'm Hotep and this is my sister Kimu. There's something going on at the palace today but it's no fun

for us kids. We need some cheering up. Wanna come with us?" Amazingly, we could understand their language, and they could understand us. They showed us around a vast complex. They even invited us to one of their lessons.



We wouldn't normally be so keen to do our lessons, but this was really fun! We sat with Hotep and Kimu around our teacher on mats made of reeds. Each of us had our own pens, palettes and inks. We learned to write hieroglyphs, the beautiful ancient Egyptian script. This kind of writing, the teacher told us, was for recording the events and great deeds in the lives of kings. They would be written on monuments and on the walls of tombs. We also learned a more ordinary handwritten version of it for everyday use.



Then some important people came up to Hotep and bowed formally. We heard them murmuring "majesty". It was then that we realised our new friend was Pharaoh himself, the king of Egypt.



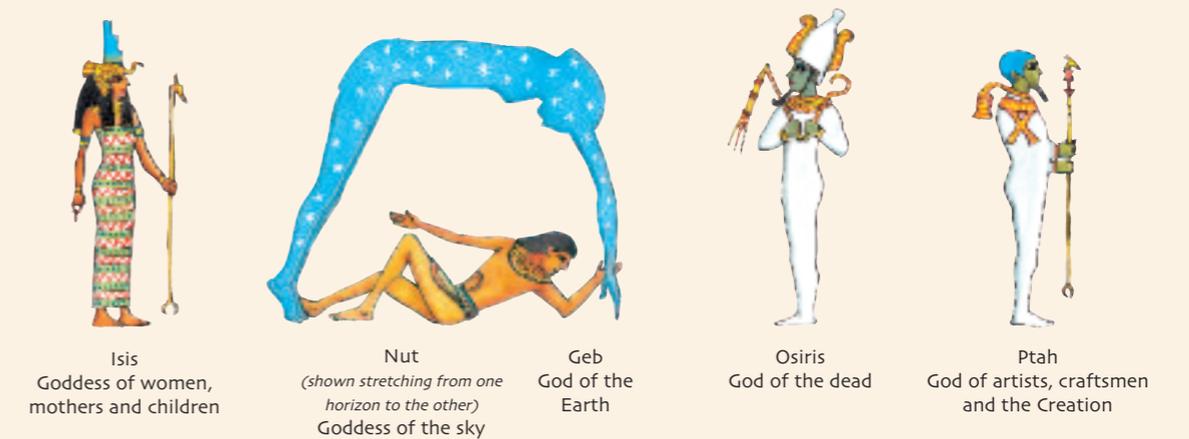
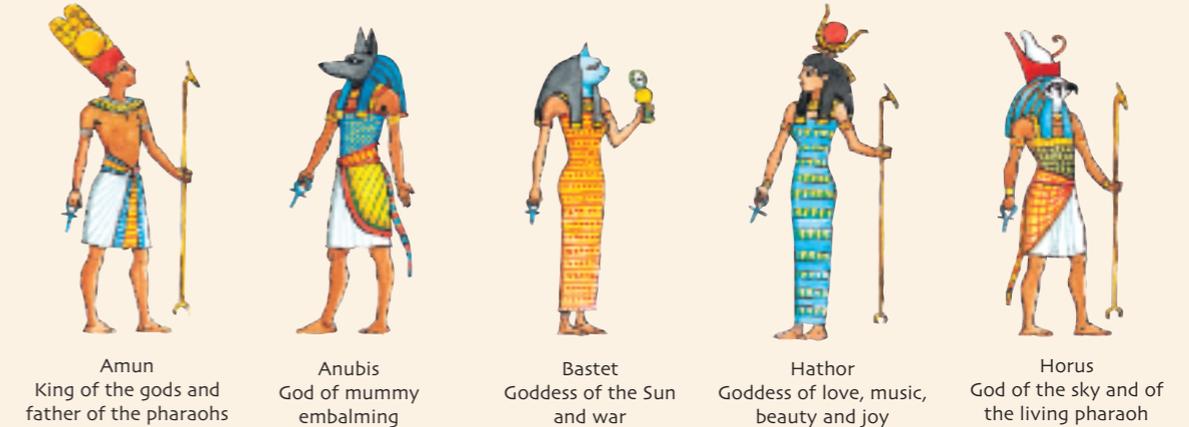
HIEROGLYPHS

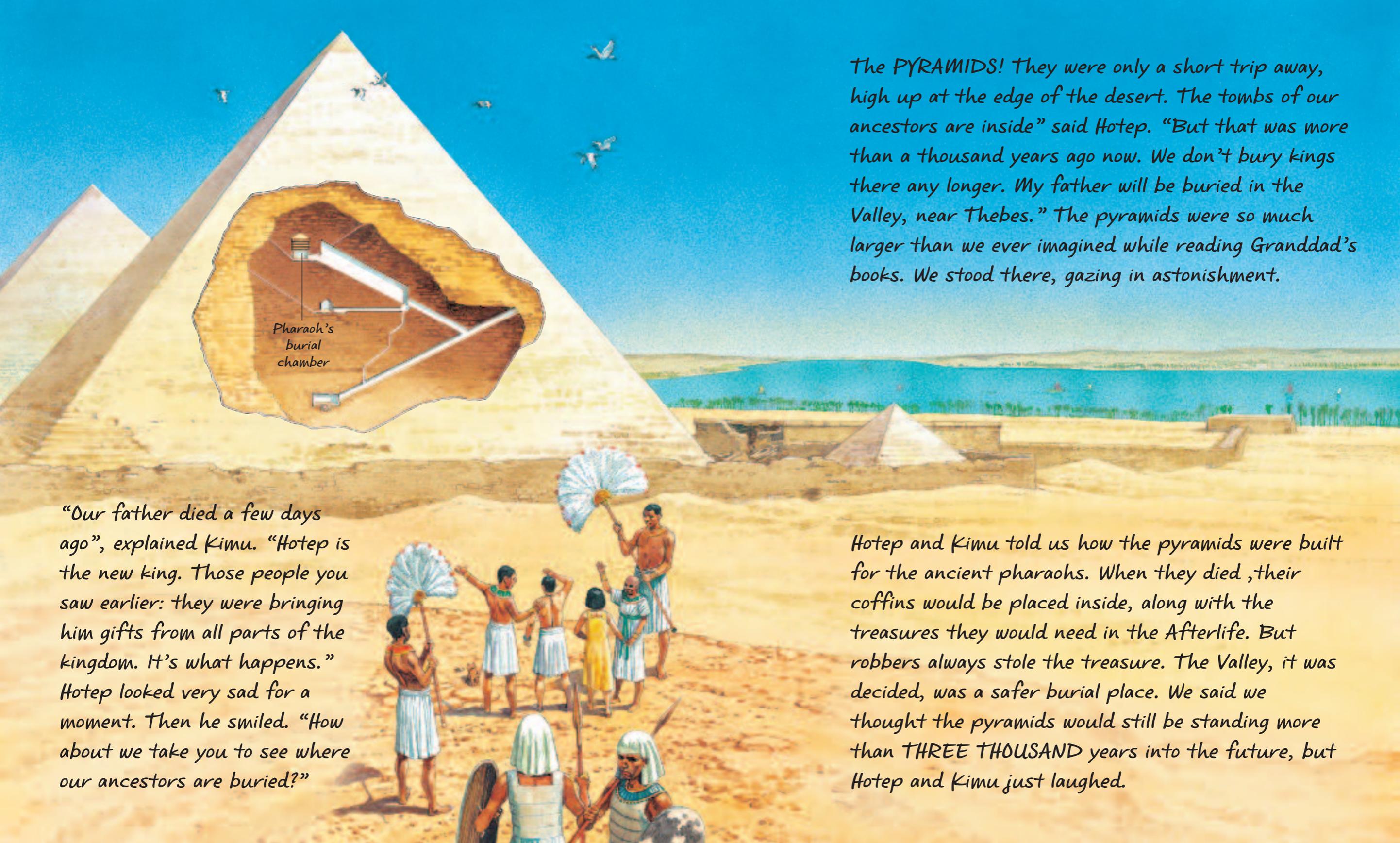
The ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphic script for writing on monuments and the walls of tombs. They used a simplified version, called hieratic, for everyday writing. Hieroglyphs are pictures of people, animals and objects, but most of them represented a sound. There are more than 700 of them. This chart shows the hieroglyphs that represent the simpler sounds—like the letters of our alphabet. There are also a few of the many that stand for part of a word.



GODS AND GODDESSES OF EGYPT

People in ancient Egypt believed that many different gods and goddesses ruled over every part of their lives. Some were thought to control natural events, such as the flooding of the River Nile each year. Others were believed to protect people in danger, for example women giving birth, or soldiers fighting in battle. National gods were worshipped in major cities and the largest temples, while local gods were only worshipped in certain towns or regions.





The PYRAMIDS! They were only a short trip away, high up at the edge of the desert. The tombs of our ancestors are inside” said Hotep. “But that was more than a thousand years ago now. We don’t bury kings there any longer. My father will be buried in the Valley, near Thebes.” The pyramids were so much larger than we ever imagined while reading Granddad’s books. We stood there, gazing in astonishment.

“Our father died a few days ago”, explained Kimu. “Hotep is the new king. Those people you saw earlier: they were bringing him gifts from all parts of the kingdom. It’s what happens.” Hotep looked very sad for a moment. Then he smiled. “How about we take you to see where our ancestors are buried?”

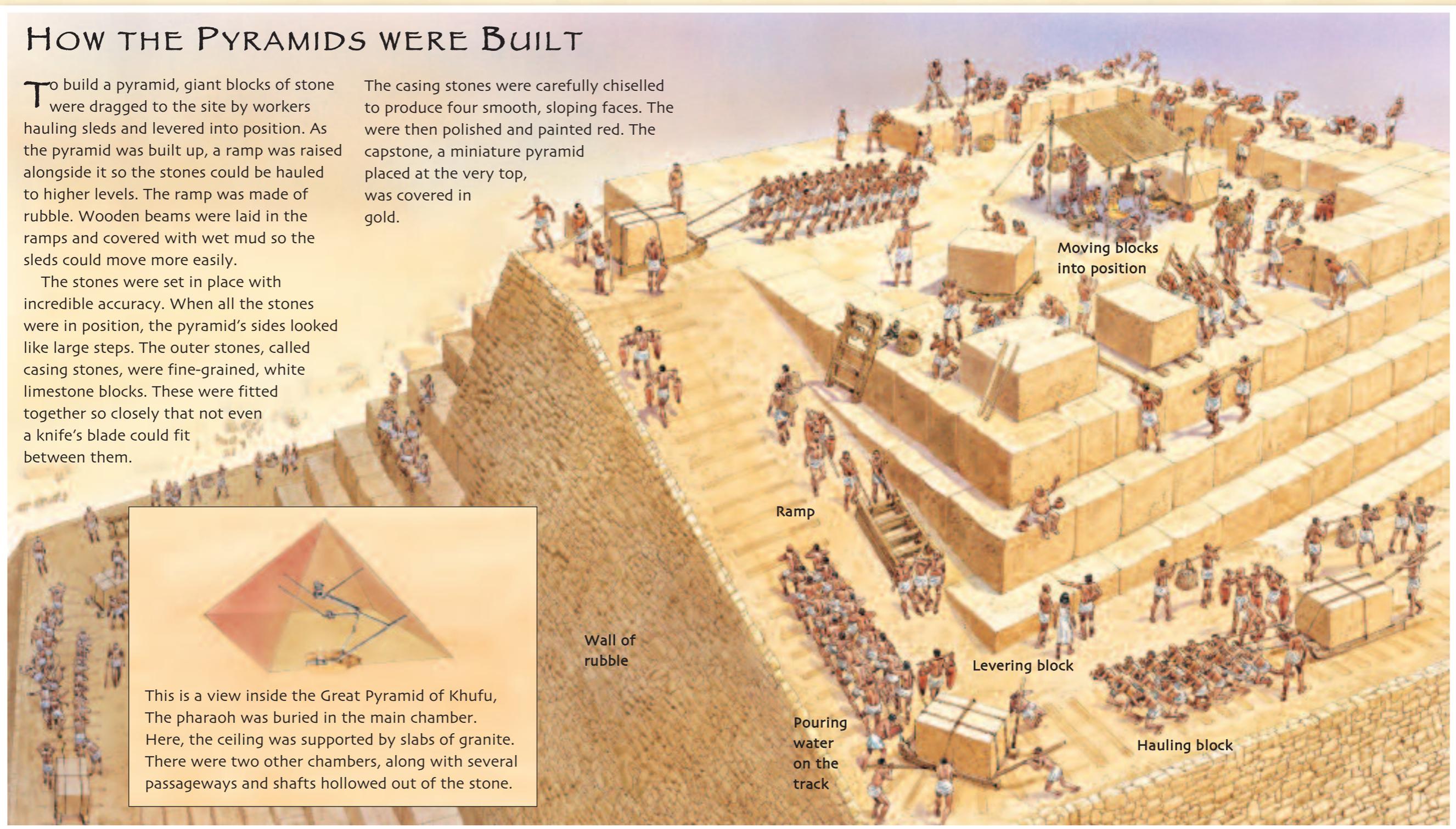
Hotep and Kimu told us how the pyramids were built for the ancient pharaohs. When they died, their coffins would be placed inside, along with the treasures they would need in the Afterlife. But robbers always stole the treasure. The Valley, it was decided, was a safer burial place. We said we thought the pyramids would still be standing more than THREE THOUSAND years into the future, but Hotep and Kimu just laughed.

HOW THE PYRAMIDS WERE BUILT

To build a pyramid, giant blocks of stone were dragged to the site by workers hauling sleds and levered into position. As the pyramid was built up, a ramp was raised alongside it so the stones could be hauled to higher levels. The ramp was made of rubble. Wooden beams were laid in the ramps and covered with wet mud so the sleds could move more easily.

The stones were set in place with incredible accuracy. When all the stones were in position, the pyramid's sides looked like large steps. The outer stones, called casing stones, were fine-grained, white limestone blocks. These were fitted together so closely that not even a knife's blade could fit between them.

The casing stones were carefully chiselled to produce four smooth, sloping faces. The were then polished and painted red. The capstone, a miniature pyramid placed at the very top, was covered in gold.



Moving blocks into position

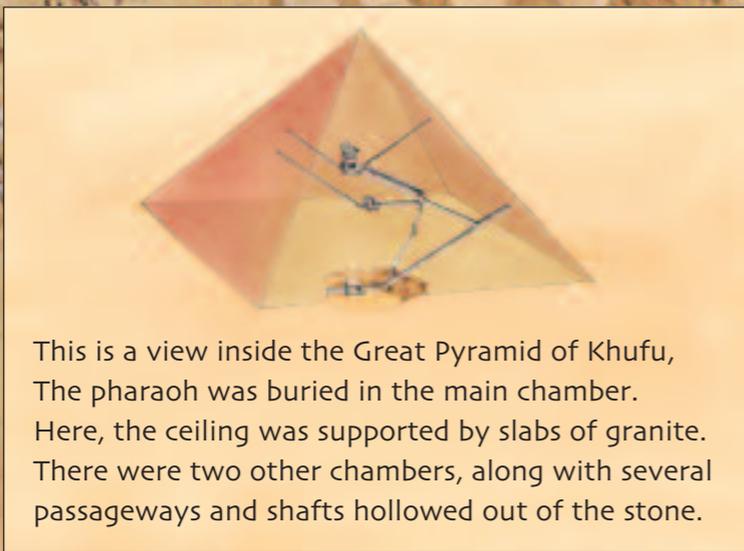
Ramp

Levering block

Pouring water on the track

Hauling block

Wall of rubble

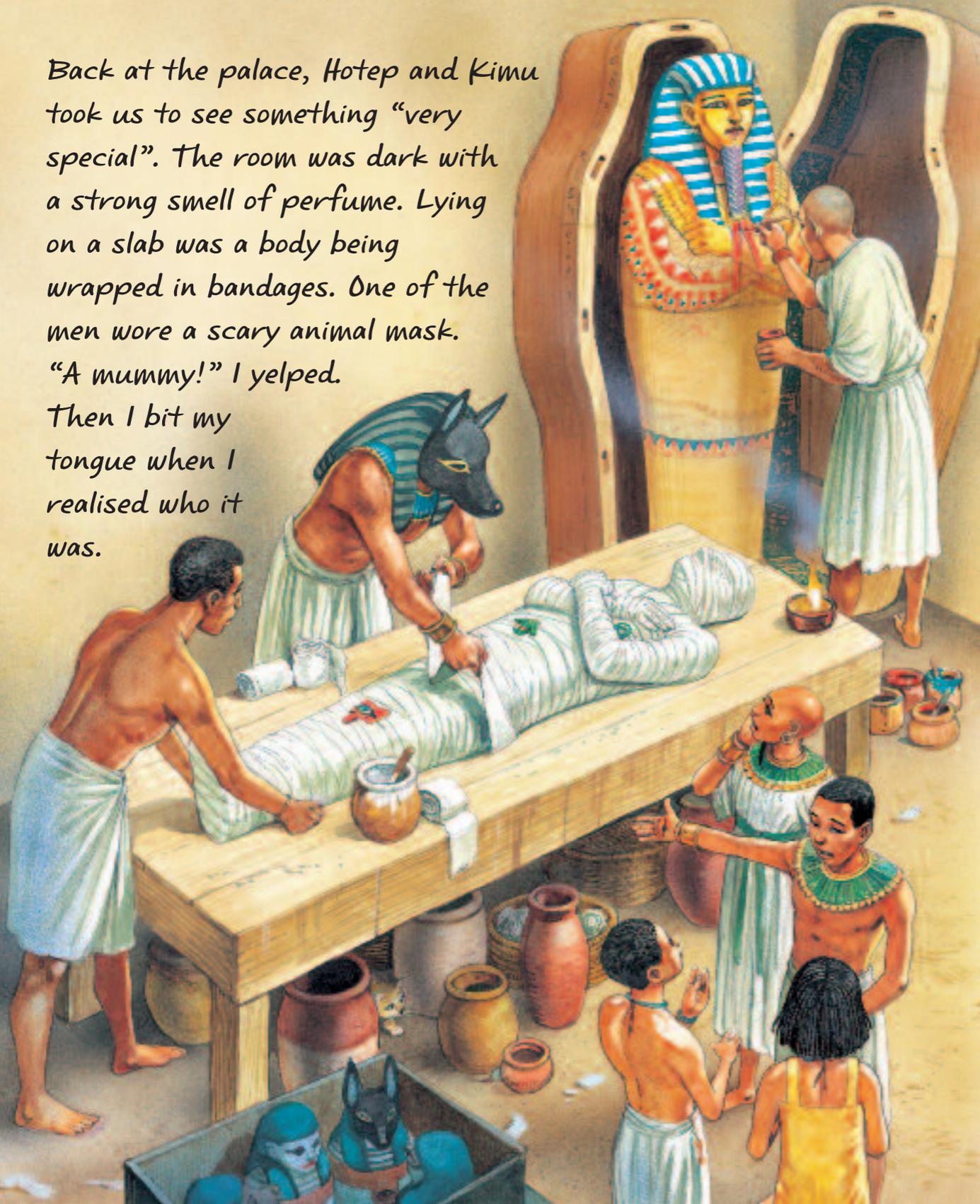


This is a view inside the Great Pyramid of Khufu, The pharaoh was buried in the main chamber. Here, the ceiling was supported by slabs of granite. There were two other chambers, along with several passageways and shafts hollowed out of the stone.

Back at the palace, Hotep and Kimu took us to see something “very special”. The room was dark with a strong smell of perfume. Lying on a slab was a body being wrapped in bandages. One of the men wore a scary animal mask.

“A mummy!” I yelped.

Then I bit my tongue when I realised who it was.

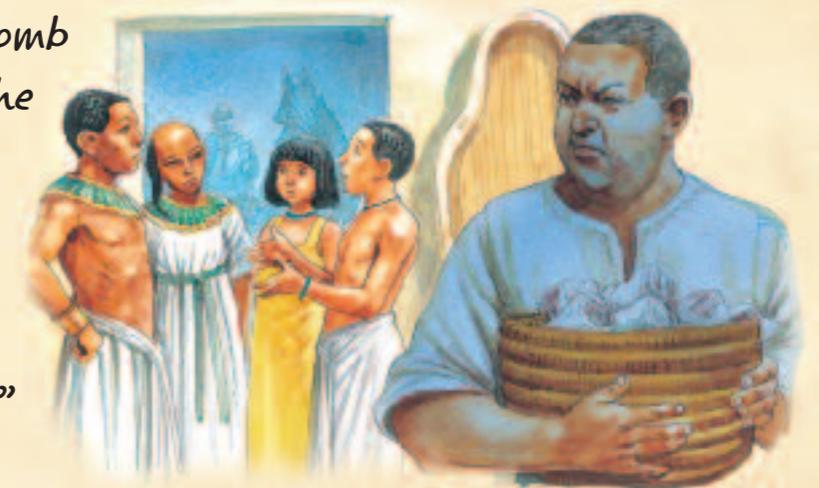


Hotep and Kimu explained how they made the mummy and what each of those jars and statues were for. I was tempted to reach out and touch the bandages they were using to wrap the body, but a sharp voice made me freeze in place. “What are you doing here?” We wheeled round to see a man looking at us sternly. “It is **STRICTLY** forbidden for **ANYONE** to be present in this chamber! How did you find your way in here?” Hotep stepped forward into the light. The man bowed his

head. “It’s OK, Neb. These are our friends. You may leave us.” We could see him muttering angrily as he stalked off.

Josh and I looked at each other. “Wasn’t that the guy in the picture, the crook?” he whispered. “Yes, I think so. Look

at that beetle necklace round his neck!” Josh told Hotep we had overheard something about Neb plotting a tomb robbery. “Nonsense!” he laughed. “Neb is my Vizier, my most trusted advisor, just as he was to my father before he died.”



The next day, Hotep and Kimu invited us to come with them on a hunting expedition. He was very keen to get away from the gloomy palace.

“LIONS?” shouted Josh. “Wow!”

Hotep told us how the pharaohs had always loved hunting in chariots.

“Hang on tight” shouted Hotep, as we clattered after them, bumping over the stones. Then, **DISASTER** struck! Our chariot started to wobble badly before a wheel

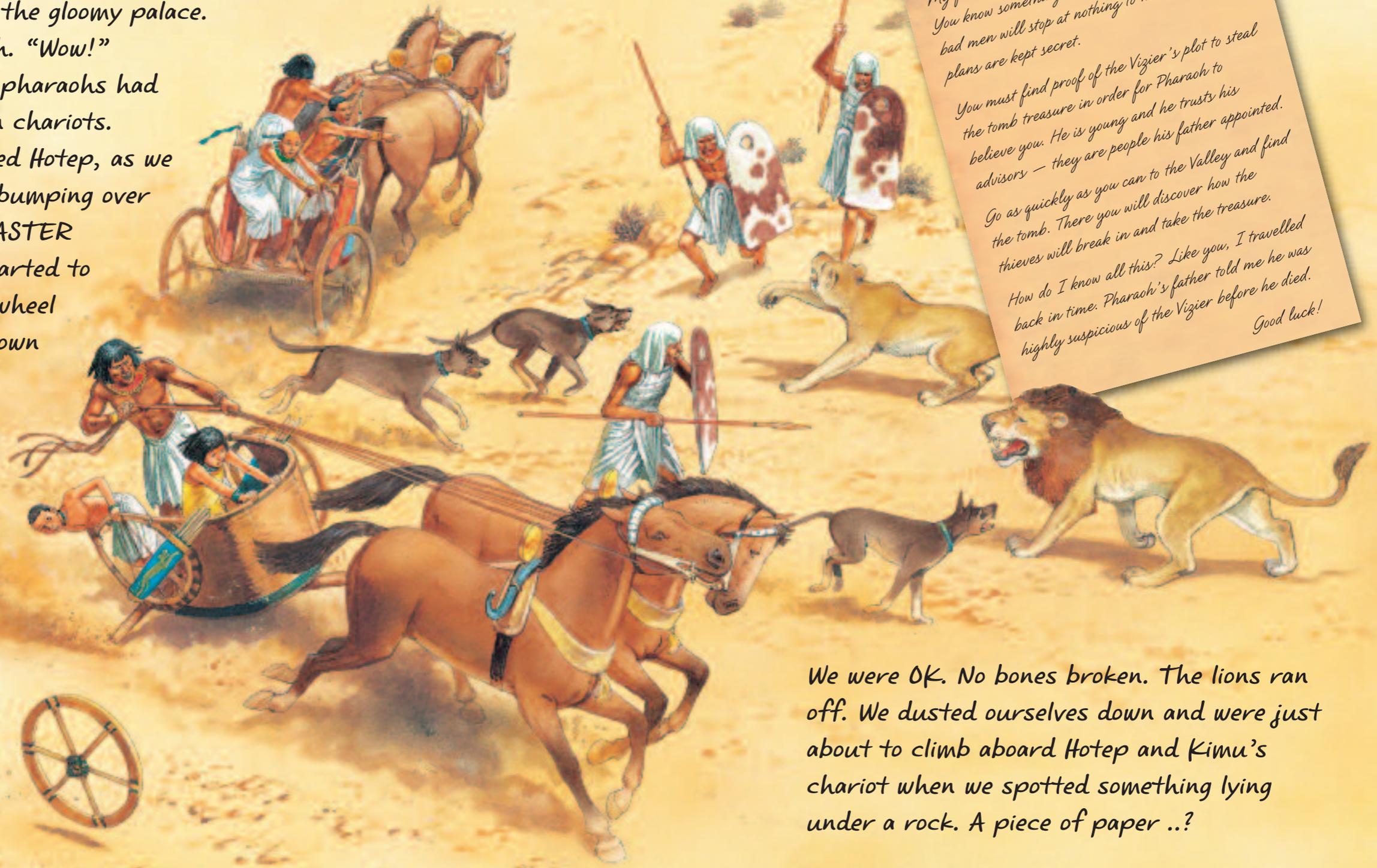
spun off. We were thrown

to the ground. Help!

Hotep’s guards had to

rush to keep the

lions at bay.



*My friends, beware: you are in great danger!
You know something very important and some
bad men will stop at nothing to make sure their
plans are kept secret.
You must find proof of the Vizier's plot to steal
the tomb treasure in order for Pharaoh to
believe you. He is young and he trusts his
advisors — they are people his father appointed.
Go as quickly as you can to the Valley and find
the tomb. There you will discover how the
thieves will break in and take the treasure.
How do I know all this? Like you, I travelled
back in time. Pharaoh's father told me he was
highly suspicious of the Vizier before he died.
Good luck!*

We were OK. No bones broken. The lions ran off. We dusted ourselves down and were just about to climb aboard Hotep and Kimu’s chariot when we spotted something lying under a rock. A piece of paper ..?

"Josh, that man—the Vizier—he tried to have us killed!" I said. He must have found out we knew about him. He clearly wanted us out the way. But Hotep said he was sure it was "just an accident". He would always trust Neb. We asked Hotep if we could sail up the Nile to the Valley. He told us he was sending his inspector, Meti, to check that the tomb was ready for his father's funeral, so now would be a perfect time to go. He himself would stay at the palace. When all was ready, he would accompany his father's coffin on the long boat journey south.



This was our chance to uncover Neb's plan and prove to Hotep that he really was a crook! We set sail on our journey up the Nile in a COOL sailing ship with a massive red sail and two oars at the back to steer it. It took us several days to get to Thebes. When we arrived, we made our way with Meti

through the narrow streets to the marketplace. It was very noisy and bustling with merchants shouting out what wares they had for sale. Somehow we got separated from Meti. We were getting a bit anxious surrounded by all these big, shouty strangers. We looked for him in the crowd but just then some men tried to grab us. "RUN!" shouted Josh. We tore through the streets with the men chasing close behind. We got away by jumping across the rooftops, but now we knew that we were DEFINITELY in great danger ...



MEDITERRANEAN SEA

A MAP OF ANCIENT EGYPT

NILE DELTA

Busiris

Avaris

The pyramids were built on a plateau above the left bank of the Nile. The most famous ones are at Giza, but there are many more pyramids further south.

Bubastis
Heliopolis
LOWER EGYPT

Giza

Saqqara

Memphis

Dahshur

Tura

This is where Pharaoh's palace was. Memphis was the first capital of Ancient Egypt.

LAKE FAIYUM

WESTERN DESERT

Nile

RED SEA



We travelled by ship all the way up the Nile from Memphis to Thebes.

Amarna

EASTERN DESERT

Asyut

The banks of the Nile are covered in green fields. Just a little bit further away from the river it's desert: dry as dust.

This is where we got chased through the streets. Thebes was the most important city in Upper Egypt. The Great Temple of Amun is here, too.



UPPER EGYPT

What Herodotus called "the Valley," later became known as The Valley of the Kings. It's a ravine in the cliffs on the opposite bank of the river from Thebes. This is where the tombs of all the later pharaohs, including Herodotus's father, were cut into the rocky sides of the ravine.

VALLEY OF THE KINGS



Thebes

Abydos

Nile



We followed Meti down a flight of steps. Ahead of us were more flickering lamps and the air grew even cooler. We could hear men working ahead. Inside a chamber with walls covered in hieroglyphs—just like the ones we learned to write in our lesson—there was what looked like a massive stone bathtub. “This sarcophagus,” said Meti, “is where Hotep’s father will be laid to rest.” Men were coming and going filling the sarcophagus with treasures. I could have sworn I saw some of them giving us shifty looks ...



Terrified and out of breath, we found Meti again. He was under strict orders from Hotep NOT to let us out of his sight and looked very angry with us for disappearing. We thought it was best to keep quiet about what had just happened.

The Valley was across the Nile in the desert. It was SCORCHING hot. Meti showed us to an entrance hidden in the rocks. Behind it, steps led down under ground. Phew, it was much cooler down here! Working by lamplight, artists were painting on the walls. Meti explained that they were putting the finishing touches to the tomb for the dead king’s funeral.



I turned to ask Meti about the funeral, but he was GONE. Not again, I thought, feeling very uneasy. Deep underground, surrounded by fierce-looking men, Josh and I looked at each other for a moment and then turned to run. But two of the men grabbed us and dragged us up the steps. "HELP!!!" we screamed. But no one could hear us all the way down here. With a grunt and a shove, they threw us into a dark pit. Luckily, a thick mat of straw gave us a soft landing, but we kept very still. We heard the men's voices fade as they left the tomb. I felt for Josh's hand. He was shivering. "Josh. You OK?" I whispered. "Yeah. What about you?" "I'm scared."



Just then, we saw a light flicker above us. We jumped to our feet. A face peered over the edge of the pit. It was one of the workers, but we could tell from his kind face that he was here to help us. His name was Oba. "Wait there. I'll throw down some rope." As we pulled ourselves



out of the pit, Oba began

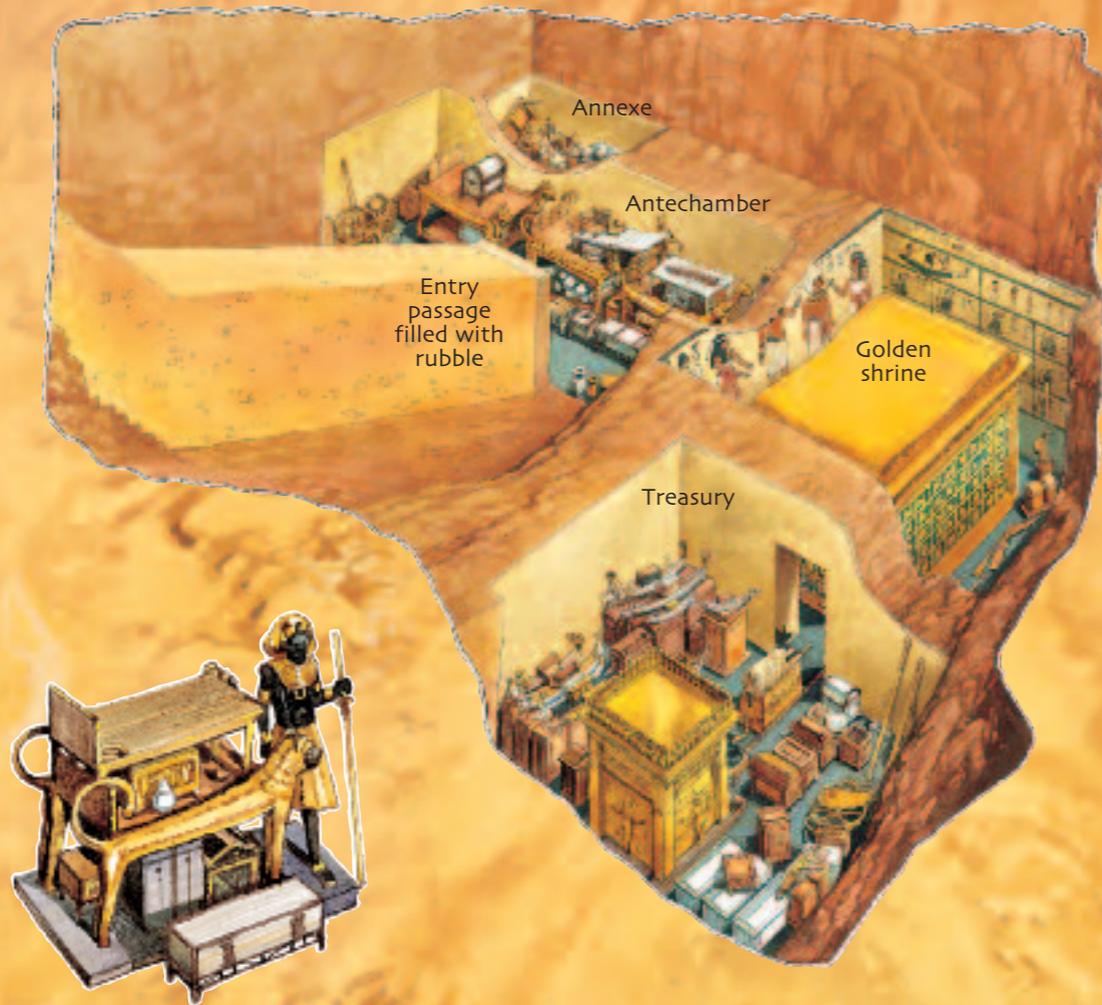
to explain in a hushed voice:

"Those men have been paid by the Vizier to steal the treasures from Pharaoh's tomb. Look." He showed us a loose block of stone. "This is an opening through to a secret passageway. When the funeral is

over and the tomb sealed up, they will come back at night, climb through and steal the treasure. We are all in danger! If they find out we know their plan, they will kill us". We knew we had to warn Hotep and Kimu. "You'll have to go into hiding for the next few days until Pharaoh arrives for the funeral", said Oba. "I will try to smuggle you into the Temple so you can try to warn him".



TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB



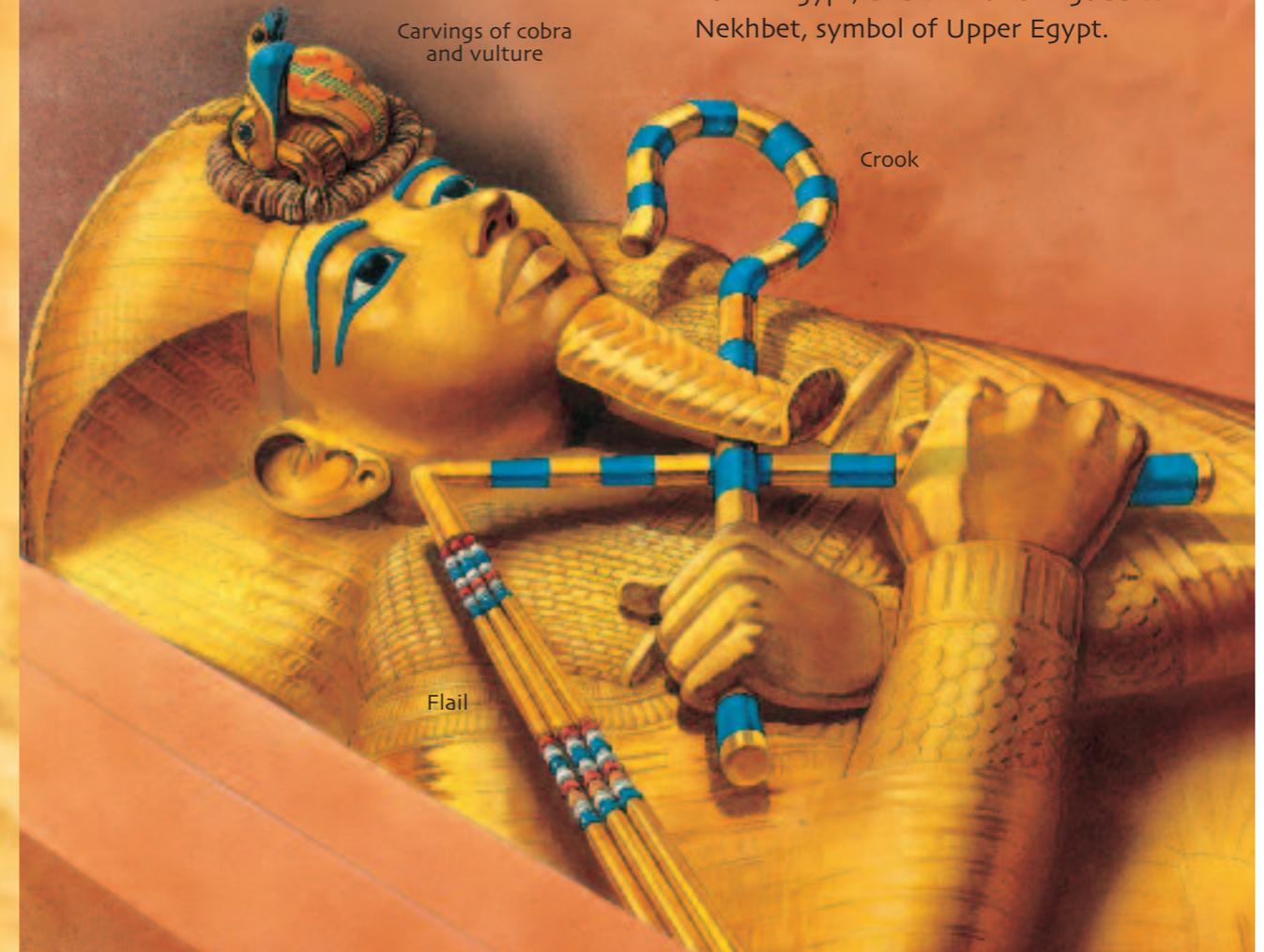
The pharaoh Tutankhamun died aged only 19. The shrines enclosing the stone sarcophagus where his coffin was placed were fitted into the burial chamber. The other chambers were filled with goods and treasures that the pharaoh might need in the Afterlife.

After two early break-ins by robbers, Tutankhamun's tomb remained undisturbed for more than 3000 years until it was discovered by British Egyptologist Howard Carter in 1922. Inside the tomb were statues, boxes, furniture, jewellery and many other precious items.

TUTANKHAMUN'S COFFIN

Tutankhamun's coffin was made of wood covered with gold. It was moulded in the shape of the pharaoh's body. Tutankhamun was shown in the image of Osiris, the god of the dead. He carried the crook and flail, symbols of his kingship. Inside this coffin were two more

coffins, one fitting inside the other. The second was also made of gilded wood and was inlaid with precious stones. The third coffin was made of solid gold. Inside this coffin lay the mummy of Tutankhamun himself. Placed over his face was a solid gold mask. This was decorated with carvings of a cobra, Wadjet, the symbol of Lower Egypt, and the vulture-goddess Nekhbet, symbol of Upper Egypt.





Thanks to Oba, a few days later we were back in Thebes at the Great Temple of Amun. The Temple was astonishing, with its high painted columns and grand walkways, but we had no time to gawp. We had to hurry. The funeral was about to begin. We saw Hotep (he was hard to miss in his funeral finery), but it was impossible to speak to him. As the new pharaoh, he took part in the formal procession. We tried to attract his attention anyway, but some priests spotted us. It was totally forbidden for all commoners (never mind kids from the 21st century!) to enter the temple. So they took us away to a small cell and tied us up. We were sure they

would be back to deal with us later.

“What do we do now, Maisie?” “Dunno. But I’m sure Hotep won’t let them harm us. That is, if he only knew we were here.” Just then, the door of our cell creaked open.

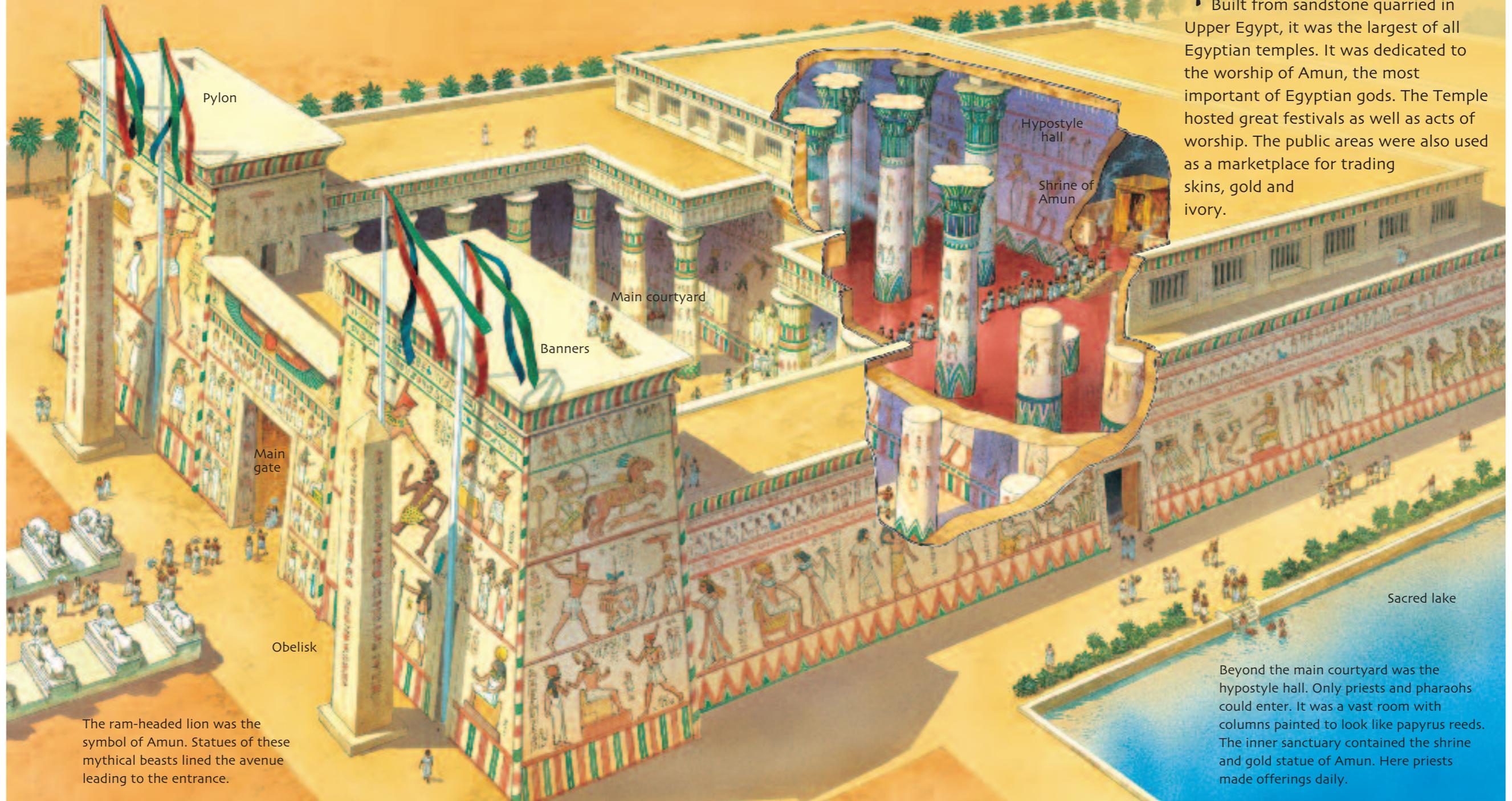


It must be

time for our punishment, I thought with dread. But it was Kimu! She untied us while we told her everything that had happened. “Let’s go!” she said. “There’s not a moment to lose!”



THE GREAT TEMPLE



This is the Great Temple at Thebes. Built from sandstone quarried in Upper Egypt, it was the largest of all Egyptian temples. It was dedicated to the worship of Amun, the most important of Egyptian gods. The Temple hosted great festivals as well as acts of worship. The public areas were also used as a marketplace for trading skins, gold and ivory.

The ram-headed lion was the symbol of Amun. Statues of these mythical beasts lined the avenue leading to the entrance.

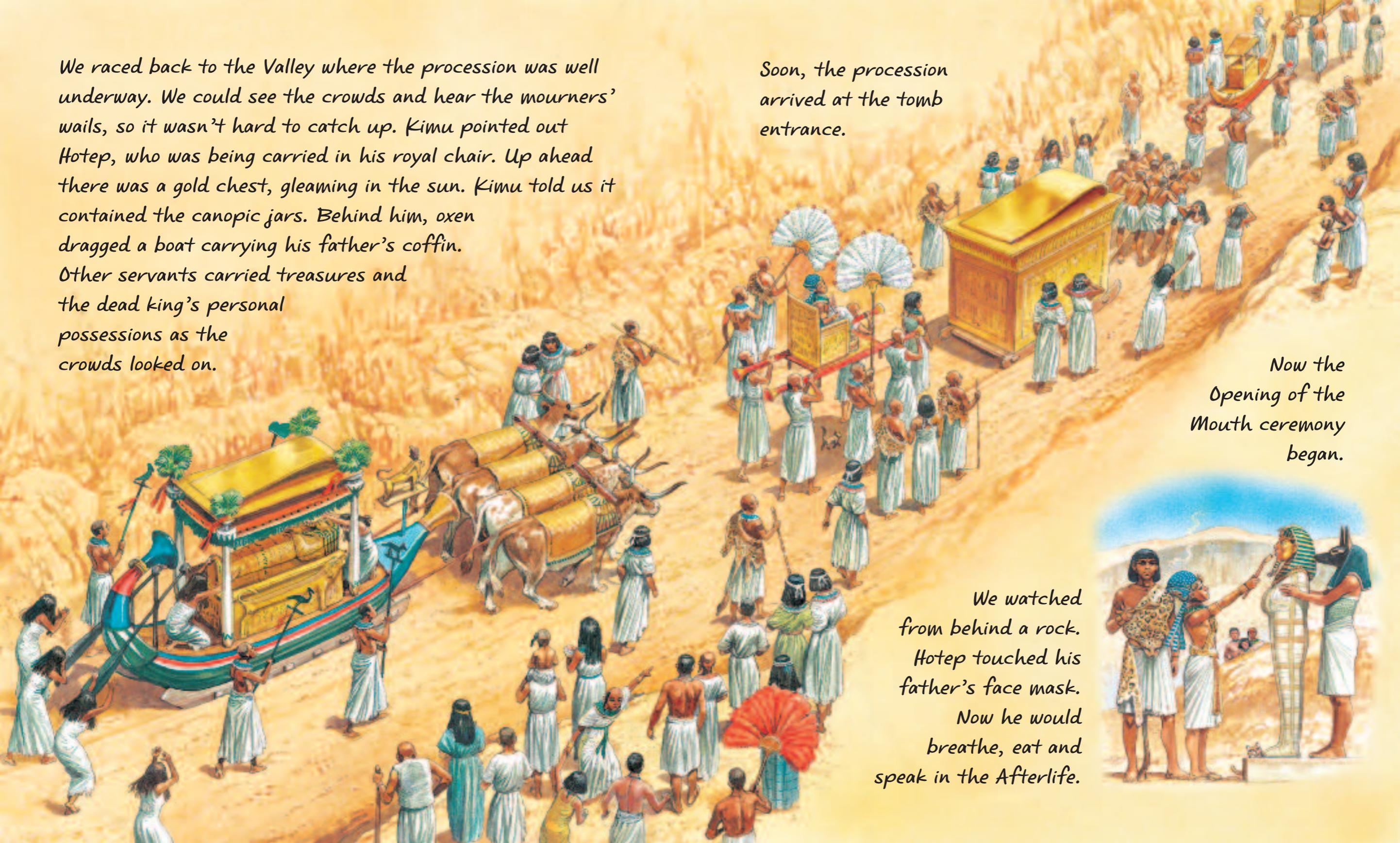
Beyond the main courtyard was the hypostyle hall. Only priests and pharaohs could enter. It was a vast room with columns painted to look like papyrus reeds. The inner sanctuary contained the shrine and gold statue of Amun. Here priests made offerings daily.

We raced back to the Valley where the procession was well underway. We could see the crowds and hear the mourners' wails, so it wasn't hard to catch up. Kimu pointed out Hotep, who was being carried in his royal chair. Up ahead there was a gold chest, gleaming in the sun. Kimu told us it contained the canopic jars. Behind him, oxen dragged a boat carrying his father's coffin. Other servants carried treasures and the dead king's personal possessions as the crowds looked on.

Soon, the procession arrived at the tomb entrance.

Now the Opening of the Mouth ceremony began.

We watched from behind a rock. Hotep touched his father's face mask. Now he would breathe, eat and speak in the Afterlife.





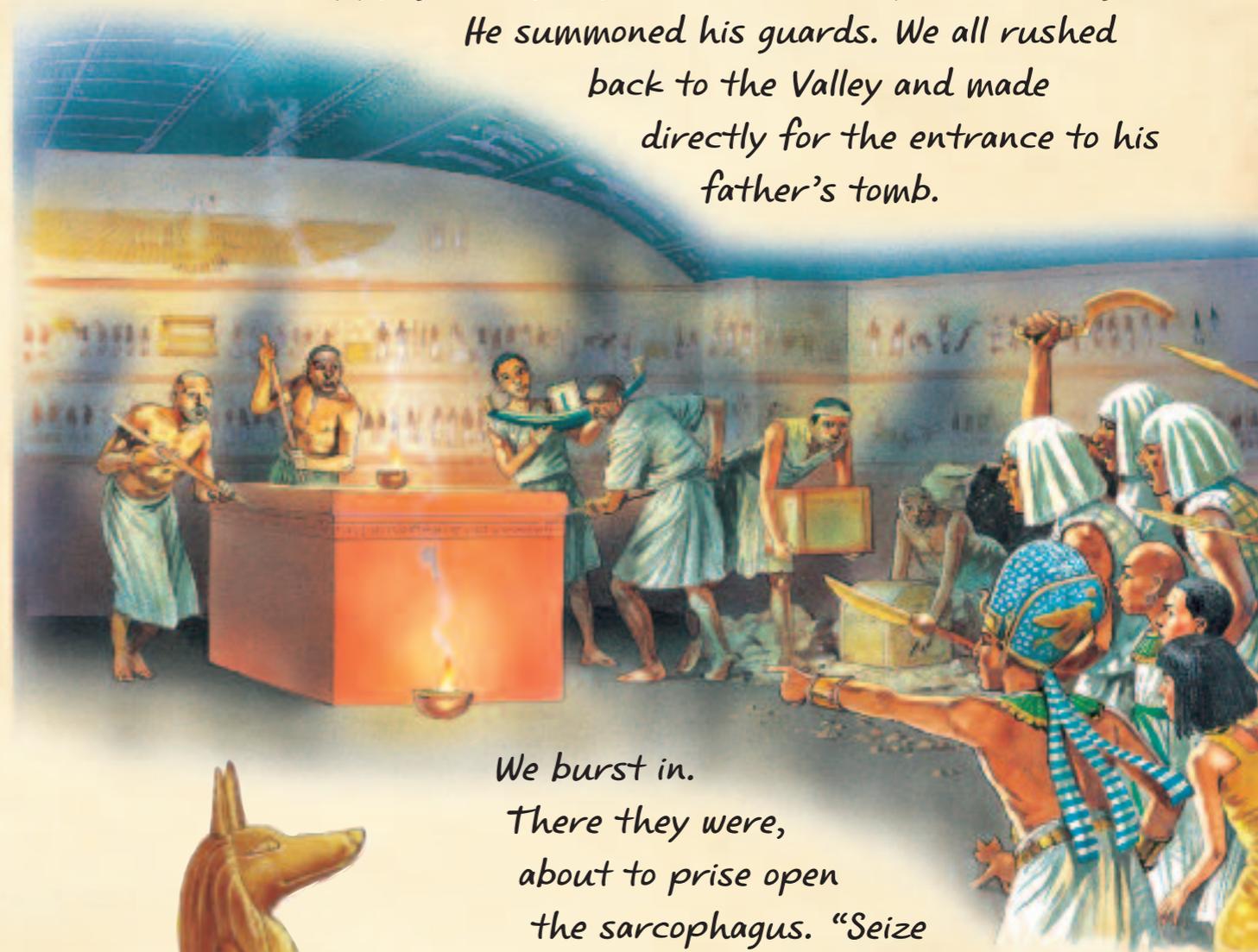
We stayed behind the rock until after the old pharaoh's coffin had been taken into the tomb and Hotep and the priests had gone. Now we were the only ones in the Valley. Or so we thought. Coming from not far off were the noises of rocks being hammered. We clambered over the

rocks and there ahead of us were some men with mallets and axes. They had opened up a doorway at the foot of the cliff and were clearing away the rubble. Remembering our experience in the tomb, we kept our heads well down. This must be the secret passageway Oba had told us about. The robbery was already underway. We had to tell Hotep!

Back in Thebes, we found him alone at last. He listened calmly, then turned to his sister. "Hotep. It's true. I've seen these men with my own eyes."



Hotep's face darkened. All of a sudden he was no longer the happy-go-lucky boy we knew, but a powerful king. He summoned his guards. We all rushed back to the Valley and made directly for the entrance to his father's tomb.



We burst in. There they were, about to prise open the sarcophagus. "Seize them!" shouted Hotep. The guards overpowered the astonished robbers. Hotep hugged us both. "You've saved the day!" He gave us this amulet as a token of thanks.

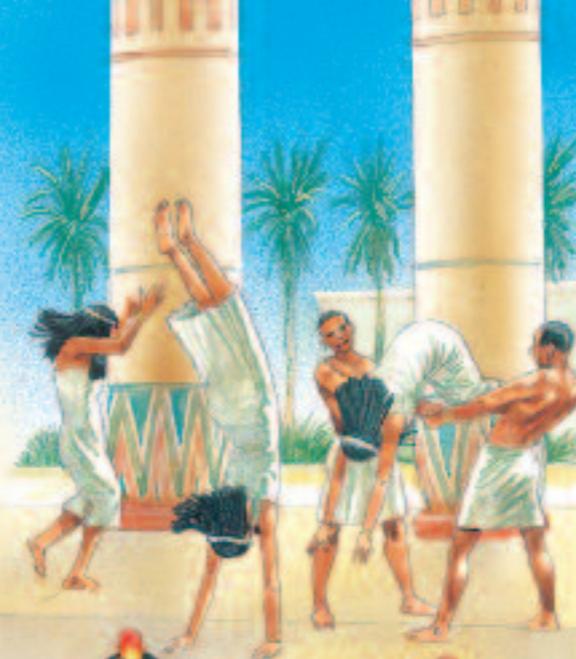
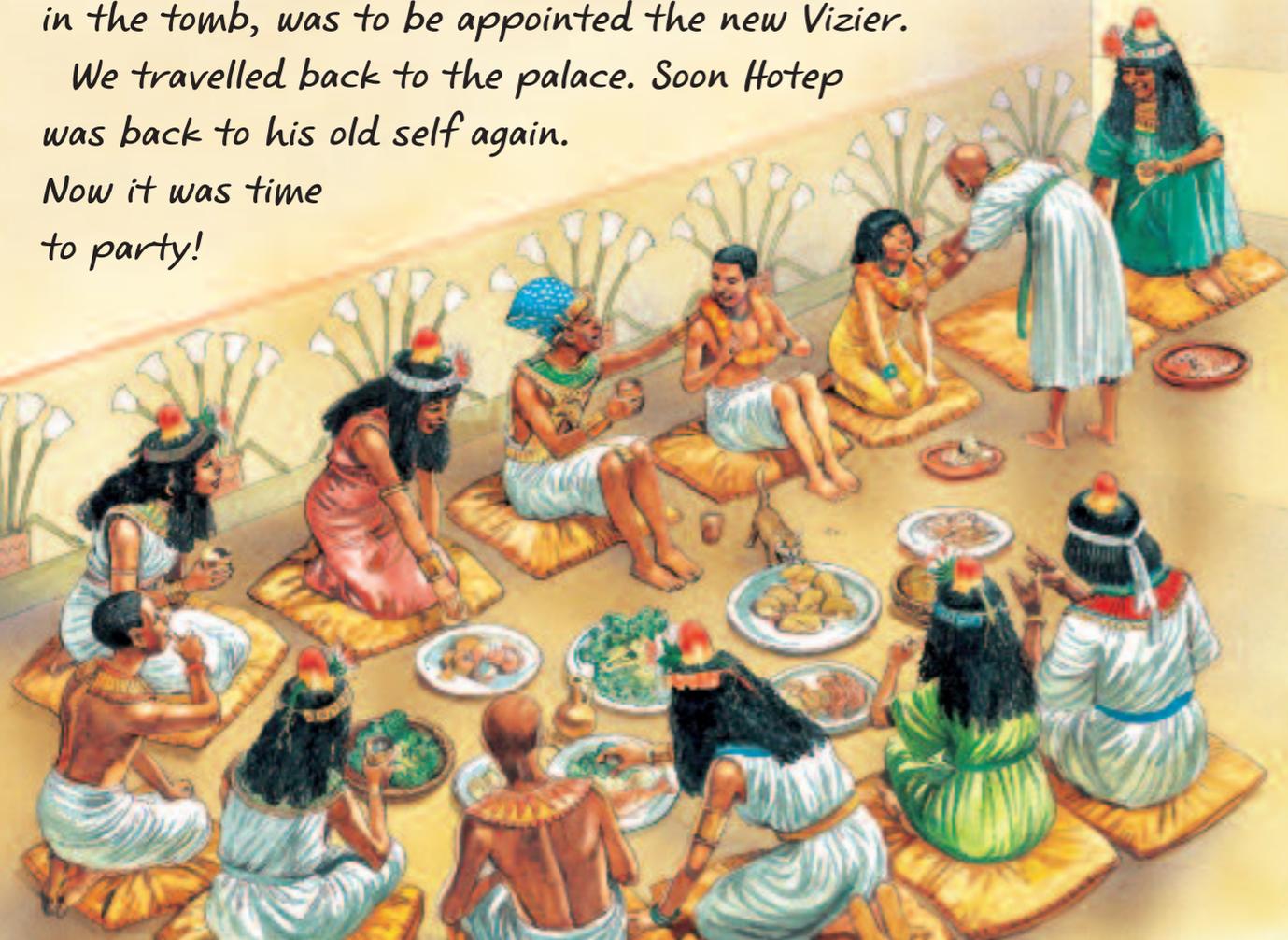




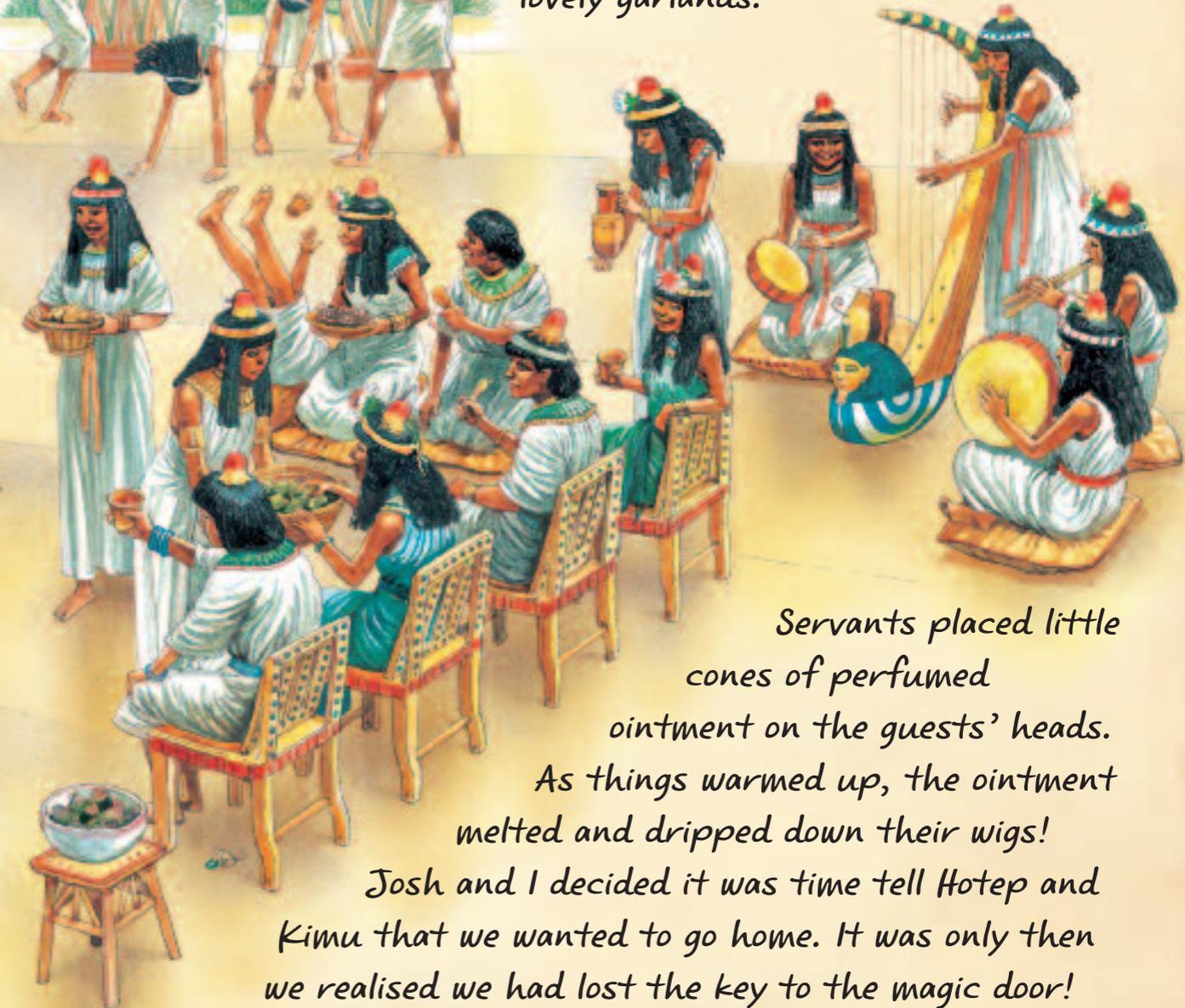
Still Hotep refused to believe Neb had anything to do with it. "Tombworkers are often tempted by the great riches they see" he said. But the robbers told the guards that the Vizier paid them to carry out their crime. They had been

ordered to hand over the treasure to him. So Hotep had Neb arrested. Meti, who had managed to escape from his captors in the tomb, was to be appointed the new Vizier.

We travelled back to the palace. Soon Hotep was back to his old self again. Now it was time to party!



First we washed our hands in basins of scented water. While we ate, musicians played and acrobats performed. Kimu and Hotep presented us, their "special guests", with lovely garlands.



Servants placed little cones of perfumed ointment on the guests' heads. As things warmed up, the ointment melted and dripped down their wigs! Josh and I decided it was time to tell Hotep and Kimu that we wanted to go home. It was only then we realised we had lost the key to the magic door!



Were we now going to be trapped here in Ancient Egypt forever? Hotep and Kimu had said we would always be welcome to live in the palace with them. But we were DESPERATE to go home. Just then, a familiar-looking man came

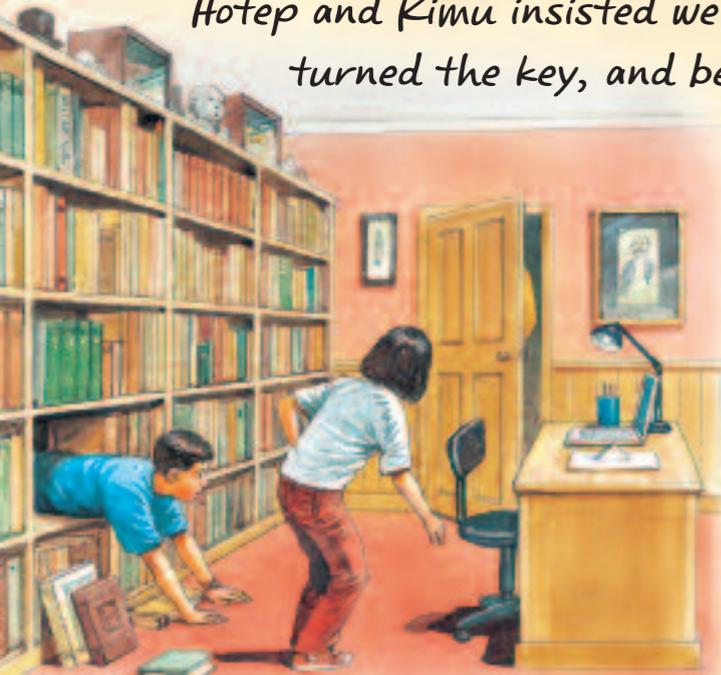
up to us. It was Oba! He had been rewarded with a new job in Pharaoh's palace. He held out our key.

"I found this at the bottom of the pit in the tomb, but I didn't know what it was. Is it a lucky charm?"

"Oh yes!" we shrieked. We thanked him warmly, then decided to slip away in case

Hotep and Kimu insisted we stay longer. We found the door, turned the key, and before we knew it, were back in

our own clothes and standing in Granddad's study. Just seconds had passed since we left! Granddad listened to our story with amazement. But you could tell he didn't really believe ANY OF IT ...



GLOSSARY

Akh To ancient Egyptians, the soul of a dead person that has been reborn in the Afterlife. The word means "shining spirit".

Afterlife Life after death.

Amulet An object intended to bring good luck and protection to its owner. These were usually made from precious stones and metals, such as gold or silver.

Ba An ancient Egyptian word for someone's personality. The *ba* had the ability to eat, drink and travel in the Afterlife. But it could not function if the dead body decayed.

Canopic jars



Canopic jars Decorated containers in which a person's internal organs were preserved as part of the mummification process. In the New Kingdom, the lids of the four jars took the form of a man, a hawk, a jackal and a baboon.

Capstone The pyramid-shaped stone at the very top of the pyramid. It was covered in gold to reflect the sun's rays.



Embalming

Crook A shepherd's curved staff, which was a symbol of a pharaoh's kingship.

Dynasty A series of rulers in the same family who keep power for generations.

Embalm To preserve a body from decay by drying it out with chemicals.

Flail A farming tool, and a symbol of a pharaoh's kingship.

Flax A plant with blue flowers, used to make cloth. The fibres from its stem are spun to make linen, which can then be woven.

Hieroglyphs A form of writing, using signs resembling pictures, written on walls and monuments. **Hieratic** was a simplified, more easily written version of this writing.

Hypostyle hall The large central hall of a temple with its roof held up by giant pillars shaped like papyrus reeds.

GLOSSARY (continued)



Face mask of
the pharaoh
Tutankhamun

Ka To the ancient Egyptians, a person's life force or "double". When kept alive by food offerings, it ensured a person would be reborn into the Afterlife.

Mummification The process of preserving a corpse by removing the organs, drying it out and then wrapping it in linen bandages. The word "mummy" comes from the Arabic word *mumiya*, meaning pitch. A mummified body's blackened appearance resembled the colour of pitch.

Next World The place a person's soul went after death.

Opening of the Mouth A ceremony taking place just before a mummy was placed in its coffin. Its purpose was to give back to the dead pharaoh the ability to breathe, speak and eat in the Afterlife.

Papyrus A reed that grew along the banks of the Nile. Its pith (the soft material inside its stem) was used to make a special kind of

writing material used by scribes. Our word "paper" comes from the Egyptian word.

Pharaoh The Egyptian word for king, which originally meant "great house" and referred to the king's palace.

Pyramid A massive stepped or pointed structure containing a pharaoh's tomb.

Pylon The gateway to a temple.

Sarcophagus The outer coffin, made from highly decorated stone, in which the wooden coffin would be laid.

Tomb A burial place cut out of the rock, as in the Valley of the Kings, or marked by an elaborate building, such as a pyramid.

Vizier A high-ranking and powerful advisor to the pharaoh.



Decorated
coffin lid and
mummy
inside

