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MAGICAL MUSEUM: ANCIENT EGYPT



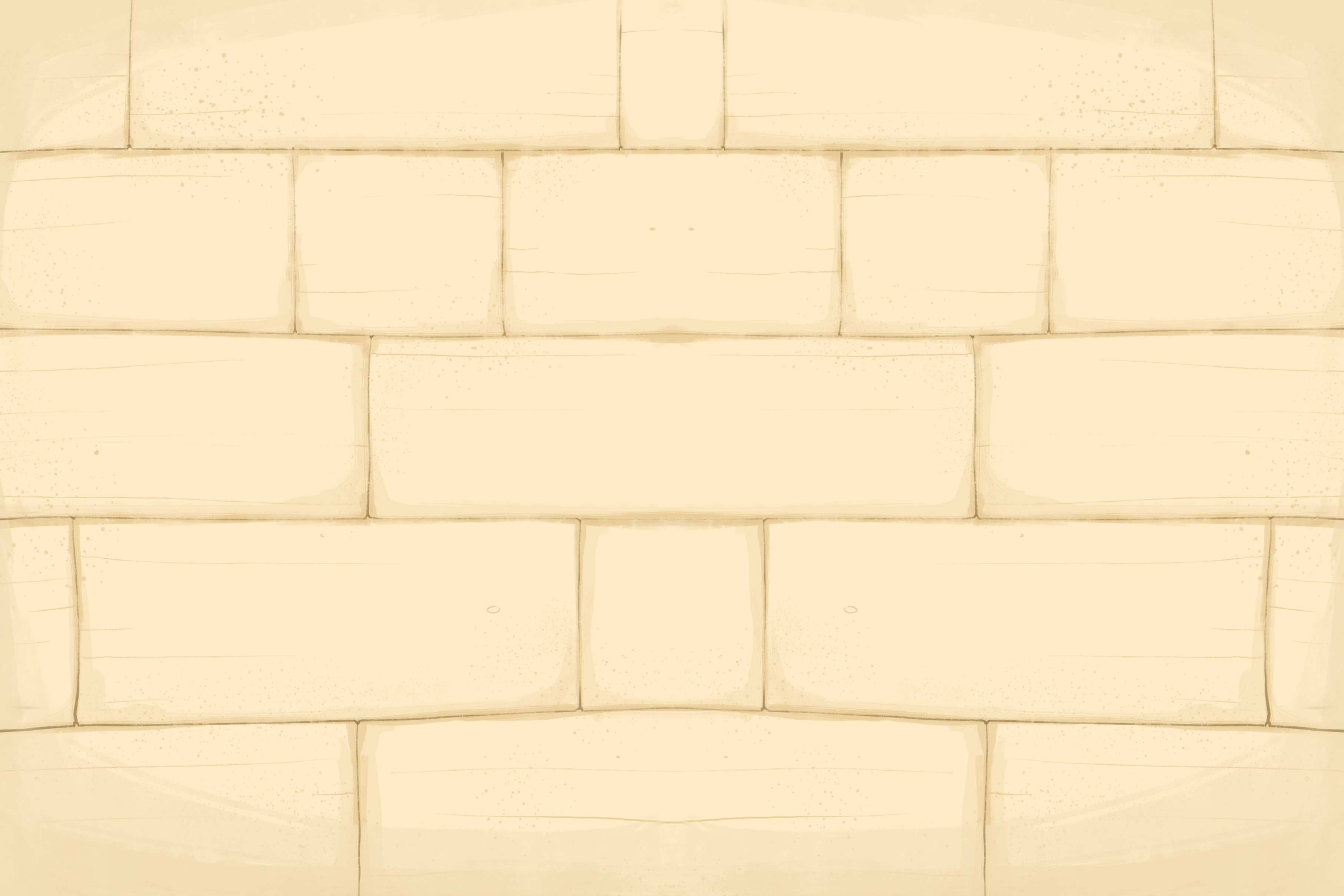
MAGICAL MUSEUM

ANCIENT EGYPT

Let's follow
in the footsteps
of the magical
scarab!



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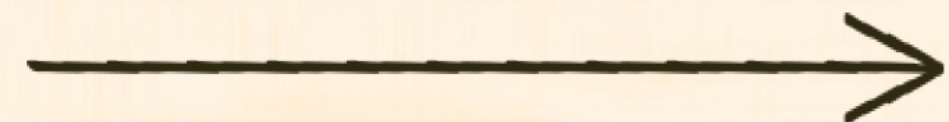


MAGICAL MUSEUM:

ANCIENT EGYPT

ANCIENT EGYPT is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, whose origins date back to 5000 BC and are closely associated with the mighty Nile River, around which the land of Egypt converges. Our ancient ancestors very quickly recognized the advantage of living near this river. In the rainy season, the river regularly overflowed its banks and flooded the land around it, but when the waters receded, it was enriched with fertile river sediment and turned out to be an ideal place for growing crops. For this reason, nomadic peoples began to settle permanently in the Nile Valley, devoting themselves to cultivating the land, which provided them with rich sustenance in return. This is how ancient Egypt was born. In the beginning, it was divided into two separate realms: Upper Egypt, which lay in the river valley in the south, and Lower Egypt, which emerged in the north around the Nile Delta. The Nile wasn't only extraordinarily good for crops, over time it became an important trade route for merchant ships and so important towns grew up on its banks. In 3000 BC, the pharaoh Menes united Upper and Lower Egypt and founded the first dynasty, which was based in the capital Memphis, and thus began the history of ancient Egypt under the reign of the pharaohs.

ENTER



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» THE MAGICAL GOLDEN SCARAB «

Meooooow ...

Hey, where are you flying off to? What are you doing? You're going to wake everyone up and turn everything upside down!

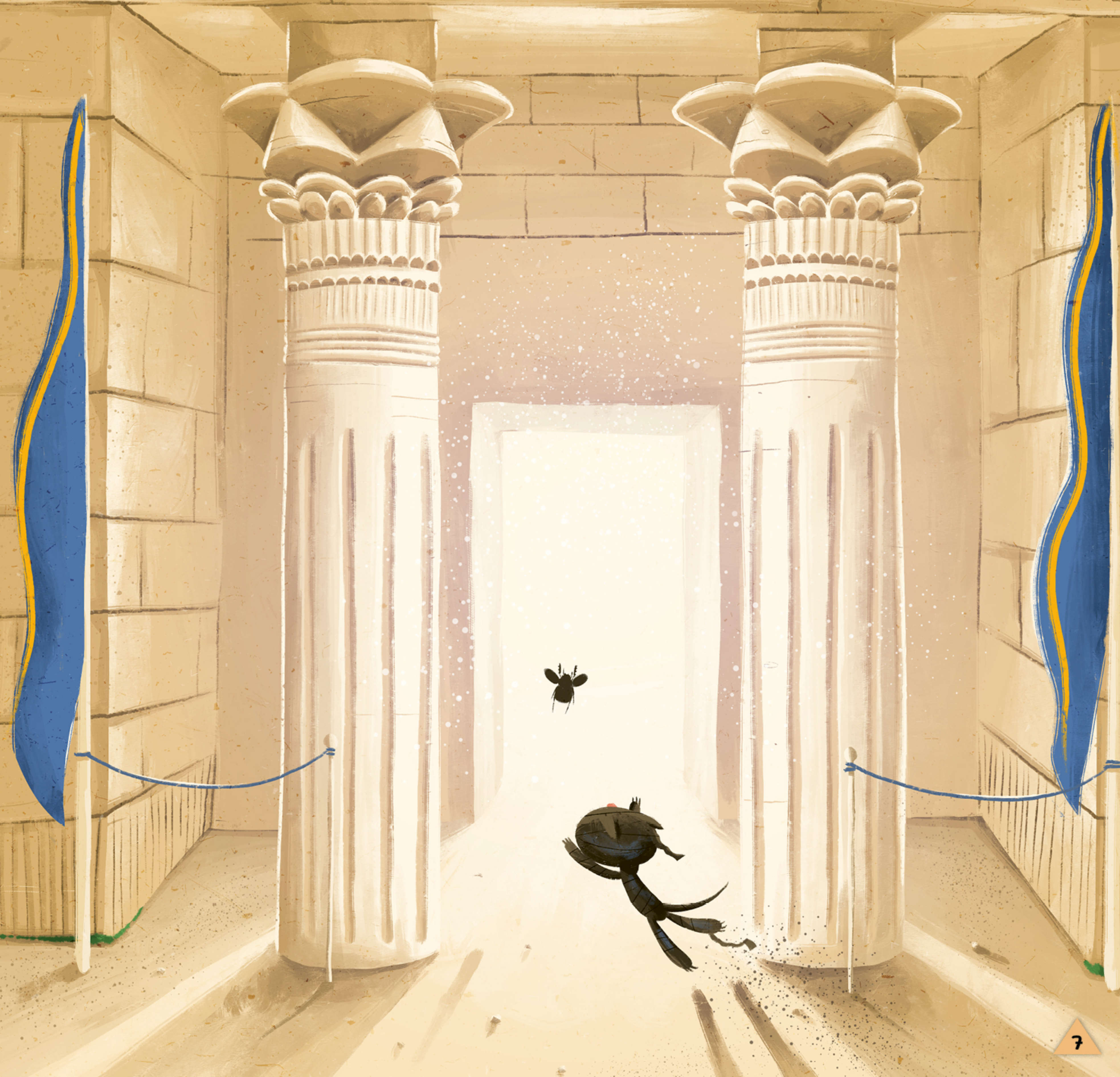



I wonder if you realize, dear reader, what you've done by opening this book. You've activated the curse of the golden or sacred scarab, which the ancient Egyptians long venerated as a symbol of rebirth. Amulets with the image of this beetle were even placed on the hearts of mummies. Well, now you've brought this one back to life and, likewise, it will arouse all of Egypt, such is the spell.

Pharaohs, queens, nobles and ordinary Egyptians will awaken and wonder what's happened to them. Oh dear, it's going to be an unholy mess! How do we get out of this fix? Well, certainly not by closing the book again. Leave it in my paws, I'll simply run and catch the scarab and undo its spell. It's just that it might take some time, after all, ... meooooooooowyawn ... I've been out of action for quite a while. I could do with some help. Will you give me a hand? That's very kind of you, welcome to the **MAGICAL MUSEUM** ...



The **ANCIENT EGYPTIANS** had an unwavering belief in the afterlife. However, in order to attain this eternal life, it was important to preserve the body of the deceased intact. Only in this way could the soul of the deceased arrive safely in the afterlife. This is why, over time, the ancient Egyptians perfected the art of mummification. However, in the early period of Egypt, the Egyptians didn't embalm their dead. They placed them in graves in the desert, where the hot and dry environment dried and preserved them, and this is probably where they got the idea for the later technique of mummifying the dead. The first attempts at artificial embalming date to around 2600 BC, under the reign of the last rulers of the Third Dynasty. The art of mummification culminated during the reign of the Twenty-first Dynasty. At that time, the embalmers were able to create mummies with the original face shape of the deceased person.





In the Old Kingdom of Egypt, **MUMMIFICATION** was carried out in special tents. These were later replaced by brick buildings with mummification workshops called 'pure places' or 'good houses', in which the embalmers worked. The chief embalmer was a priest who supervised the entire complex ritual of mummification, which lasted 70 days.

» MUMMIFICATION «

Wow, I know this place! This is where they mummified me.

The wealthier a person was, the more extravagant their **DEATH MASK** was. The noble dead were adorned with masks made from gold and precious materials, while poor people had to make do with plaster masks painted in glittering colours.

The **PRIESTS** in charge of the mummification also provided places in the tomb for poorer people. They owned many tombs for people from the lower social classes, which they sold for money or material possessions. They also collected fees from the deceased's relatives for the upkeep of the mummy and the tomb and all the spiritual services for the full 70 days. In short, the journey to the afterlife didn't come cheap.



The embalmers first took the brain and internal organs out of the dead body. Only the heart was left there, as the Egyptians considered it to be the centre of a person's intelligence and feeling.



After 40 days, they filled the dried body with sawdust, leaves, straw or cloth impregnated with resin, smeared it with fragrant oils and wrapped it in long strips of cloth, between which they inserted protective amulets.



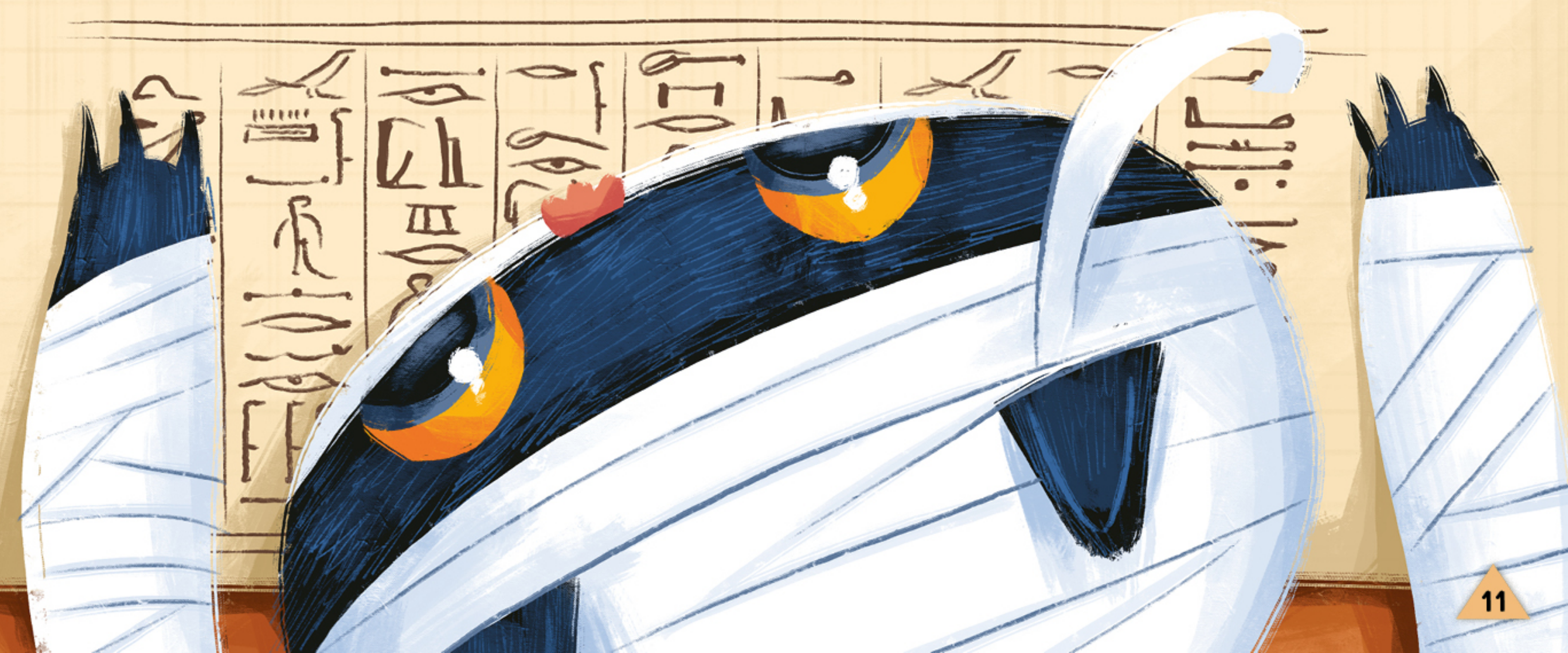
The removed liver, lungs, stomach and intestines were washed in natron, which was a natural salt, and then stored in special containers called canopic jars.



Finally, they covered the deceased's head with a funeral mask and placed the body in a coffin. All through this complex process, the embalmers recited prayers for the soul of the deceased.



They washed the body with palm wine, stuffed the inside with natron, and also sprinkled natron on the outside.



» GLOSSARY OF TERMS «

A

Ankh — an Egyptian cross symbolizing life.

Aristocrat — a member of the nobility.

B

Banquet — a social event where people eat, drink, dance and play musical instruments. They were very popular in ancient Egypt.

C

Canopic jars — containers in which the internal organs of the dead were stored.

Carter, Howard — the amateur archaeologist who discovered the virtually untouched tomb of the hitherto insignificant pharaoh Tutankhamun.

Champollion, Jean Francois — French philologist and archaeologist who deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphs.

D

Determinatives — hieroglyphic characters used to distinguish words that are spelled the same.

H

Hierarchical proportion — a type of painting where more important or higher status people were painted larger and taller than less important people.

Hieratic script — a simple script designed for writing secular documents (recipes, accounts and literary texts).

Hieroglyphs — typical Egyptian pictorial script used for writing religious and cult texts.

K

Kalasiris — a slim dress with straps that ancient Egyptian women wore.

M

Mehen — a popular ancient Egyptian board game in the form of a coiled snake.

Mummification workshops — houses of purification, places where the Egyptian dead were mummified.

N

Nemes — a striped headdress only worn by Egyptian rulers, worn in place of a crown.

Nubian wood — wood imported from Nubia, usually ebony.

P

Papyrus — the primary material for writing on in ancient Egypt, which was made from the stems and pith of the papyrus plant.

Pectoral — the decorative collar of the pharaoh, the jewellery worn on their chest.

Pharaoh — the title of rulers of ancient Egypt.

Phonograms — hieroglyphic characters expressing sound.

Pictograms — hieroglyphic signs representing things, ideas or figures.

R

Rosetta Stone — a stone slab with inscriptions in three different scripts, hieroglyphic, hieratic and ancient Greek, whose discovery helped scholars decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs.

S

Sarcophagus — a box in which a coffin was placed, usually made of stone.

Scarabeus sacer — the sacred scarab — a beetle from the scarab family that was for the ancient Egyptians a symbol of reincarnation and the cycle of life. Amulets in the form of scarabs were placed on the hearts of mummies. *Hello, you're talking about me, if I'm not mistaken ...*

Senet — a popular ancient Egyptian board game.

Sistrum — a rattle-like musical instrument that was sacred.

U

Ushabti — figurines of helpers that were meant to serve the deceased in the afterlife. They were commonly found among the burial goods of the deceased.

V

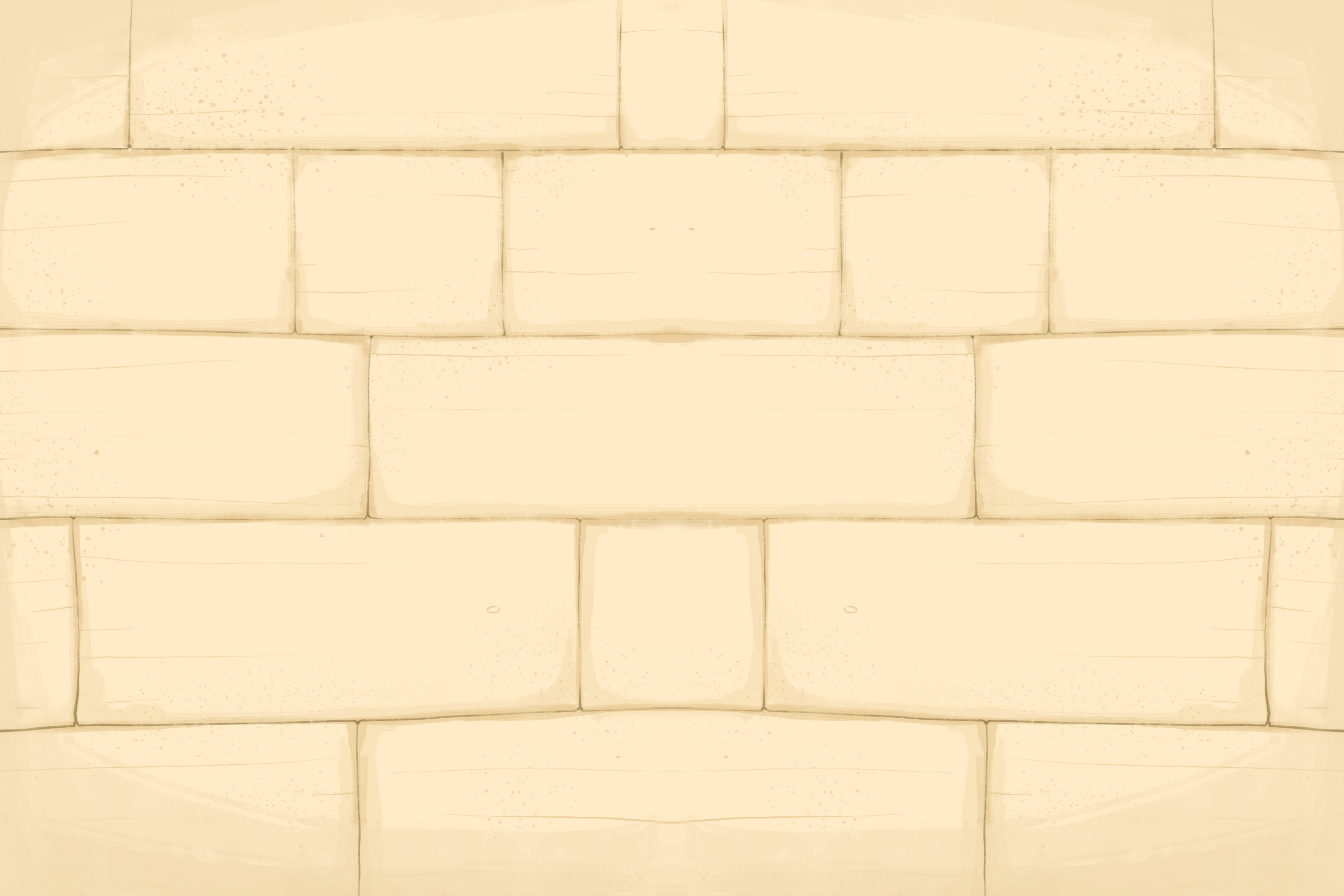
Vizier — the highest ancient Egyptian official, representative of the pharaoh.



PLEASE DON'T WAKE UP
OUR SACRED SCARABS!

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ANCIENT EGYPT


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Some people like museums, while others find them boring. But a museum ruled by magic and sorcery is something altogether different. If you don't believe it, open this book and things will happen. You will trigger the spell of the sacred scarab and the museum exhibits of ancient Egypt will come to life, including a cat who remembers the famous Cleopatra. The mission of this feline is to put things right, to catch the scarab and undo its curse. But it is no easy task. Together with the cat and its grey mice helpers, you will run through the museum in pursuit of the scarab. Along the way, you'll learn plenty of interesting facts about the amazing civilization of ancient Egypt, without even realizing it.