

RISING STARS

The Language of Stony Silence

by Sabah Moyeen

TO many of us today, Egypt is a baffling phenomenon: a land of deserted monuments, silent statues, static art; itself mummified within dusty volumes of history books. It has become a myth rather than a part of human history. Can we turn our backs on 3000 years of glory and an ancient people of remarkable creative genius, pursuing eternity through their art and culture?

Egypt was one of the first of the ancient lands to weave the threads of civilisation into a truly impressive culture. It sustained its accomplishments over 25 millennia — a span of achievements few equal in the annals of humanity. One would have to write volumes to do justice to the overall effort of the ancient Egyptians. I have restricted myself to some aspects of their mesmerizing architecture, which forms as it were — "the message of the stones" — the key to a mysterious, obscure land.

It is a matter of no little wonder, that the people of an ancient land, without sophisticated tools, expressions of measure or weight, with the aid of nothing but stony silence, were able to erect such massive pieces of perfect symmetry and beautiful art. Under the omnipotent authority of the pharaoh were built miracles of stone which till today leave us breathless. The gigantic monuments, silent and mysterious led their contemporaries to believe the Egyptians to be a gloomy, oppressed race, obsessed with death. Now, where we have deciphered the language of stony silence, we know them to be a light hearted, jovial people who living in an age of ephemeral spirituality, who envisaged death as merely a continuance of life in a different perspective.

Imagine the hysteria of the first Greeks who arrived at Egypt to encounter a gigantic limestone beast crouching on the sand near Gizeh, with a lion's body measuring 240 feet in length and 66 feet in height with a human face 13 feet wide. Could it be any different from the awe it would draw from us today? The Sphinx — a wood which has almost become synonymous with all the wild excitement an enigma can generate. The Sphinx was regarded as an embodiment of Harkhaph, a manifestation of the sun god, and the face is a portrait of Khafre who ruled during the time of its creation. An ancient text reveals that a

young prince once sat under the shade of the Sphinx, and the beast spoke to him and promised him the Kingdom if he removed the sand that had piled around it. The prince did as bidden, and 34 centuries ago, did indeed rule Egypt as Thutmose IV. At that time the Sphinx was already 1100 years old. The monument is symbolic of ancient Egyptian beliefs, values, culture and the sheer enormity of vision their mind could conceive, is an age so primitive, the cosmos so

when unwrapped in 1881, hair and teeth still intact. Ramses II survived the ages, but underwent a harsh insult when an Egyptian officer taxed his body taking it be imported dried fish!

During the opulent 67 year reign of Ramses II Egypt gave birth to some of its largest and showiest buildings. It is mind-blowing to imagine the tremendous scale on which the ancient Egyptian worked. The two huge temples cut into the cliffs at Abu Simbel are

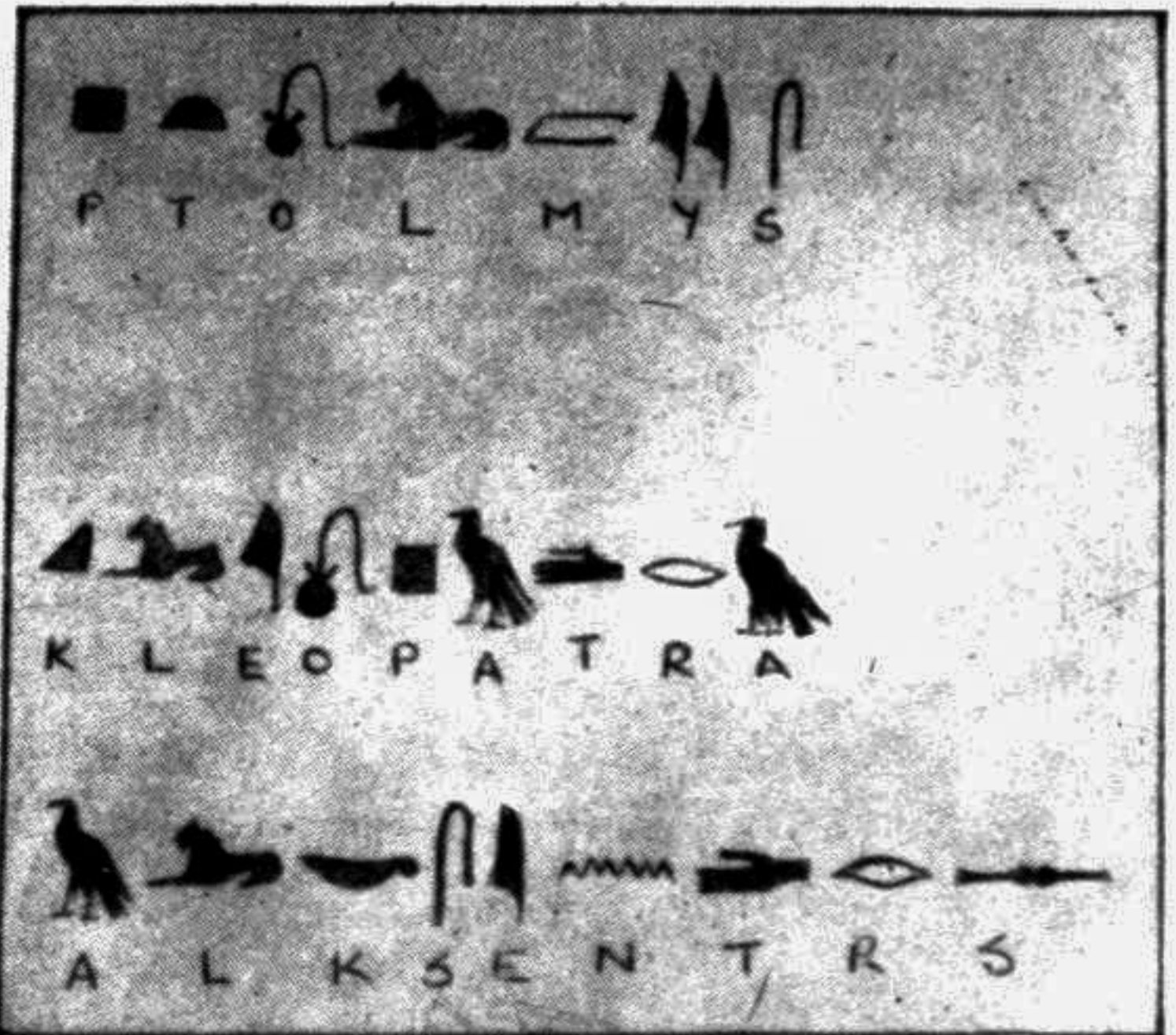
clime of a great civilisation. An abandoned god — a fallen grandeur. It was such a statue of Ramses II which inspired Shelley to write: "On the sand/Half sunk, a shattered visage lies... And on the pedestal these words appear: My name is Ozymandias, King of kings: / Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"

There are vast demonstrations in stone of the numerous deities worshipped by the Egyptians: Re, the sun god, who ruled from Heliopolis, Hathor goddess of love and childbirth appeared wald in human form with the hours of a cow. Thoth was the head of an ibis, while Anubis, guardian of the temples wore that of a jackal. Khum who fashioned men and babies on a potter's wheel wore the head of a ram. Osiris was ruler of the underworld. According to legends the pharaoh ruled on earth as horus and when he died, as Osiris, in the nether world.

For centuries, Egyptian hieroglyphics carved on stone, added the minds of many. In 1798 one of Napoleon's soldiers discovered the Rosetta Stone near Rashid, inscribed with not only hieroglyphics, but denoted and Greek. Its bilingual text made it possible for the philologist Jean Francois Champollion to announce in 1822 "the message of the stones", the language of hieroglyphics, thus discovering the lost key to an ancient, mysterious land.

The inscription on the Rosetta stone praises Ptolemy V in 196 BC. Ptolemy's name which appears in the Greek text as 'Ptolemais' was the first word recognised in hieroglyphics. In 1822 under word surrendered its hieroglyphic enigma: 'Kleopatras'. Armed with the discovery of 12 phonographs Champollion eagerly applied them to another cartouche and deciphered the word 'Alkassars' — Alexander. The most important break through came in September 1882, when, in encountering cartouches pre-dating the Greek on the Roman era he discovered his first purely Egyptian names 'Ramses' and 'Thutmose'.

We have unlocked the door to an ancient kingdom. In venturing beyond, have we been able to retrieve AU its secrets? The stones are silent. While we labour to find their obscured message. Do they still hold discoveries for newer generations? Only time will tell.



narrowed down.

The pharaohs, according to the belief was destined to the forever. They therefore built extravagant tombs and shrines ensuring a comfortable after vast sculptures and temples were built, which, as I write still gaze across Egypt, proud and authoritarian, sentries of past glory — some 2000 years after the culture which created them warned and perished. By 2500 BC during the reign of King Djoser, the first pyramid had already been built by Imhotep, of stone blocks weighing 15 tons. It was soon dwarfed by other mammoth pieces of perfect precision and symmetry springing up at Gizeh. The tallest pyramids were those built for Khufu (of more than 2 million stones weighing 25 tons, completed within a reign of 23 years) and Khafre. They were fitted with luxury articles, food etc, their walls rendered immortal by paintings depicting the ruler's reign and made priceless by the embled body of the pharaoh himself. The 3000 year old mummy of Ramses II now at Cairo museum, showed,

symbolic of this grand scale. Four 67 feet high statues of Ramses II were carved overlooking the Nile speaking of the might and power of a virtile King.

Egypt's reign was mostly male dominant. Many queens won great renown as wives to kings. The striking statue of the lovely Nefertiti, built in the realistic style, during her husband Akhenaton's reign, reveals the beauty implied by her name which means: 'the beautiful One is come'. The most famous woman who did rule, was the willful Queen Hatahepsut, who built a lavish temple below the cliffs of Deir el Bahri, to keep her name alive. The chief exploits of the Queen's reign are carved along the porticoes. Much of her memorial was destroyed by her vengeful son Thutmose III.

Perhaps the most sombre relics of ancient Egypt is the unfurnished state of Osiris, lord of eternity, carved 2000 years ago, horizontally out of the ground at a red granite quarry near Aswar. Its purpose has been lost in the abyss of age, but it symbolises the de-

On the Receiving End

by Md Atique Ullah

The robbers have opened the safe full of sparkling jewels and gold As they are about to fill their sacks they tremble with fear. What will happen now? Will they be able to run with their booty?...

The maid also came and helped them fill in the sacks. She stood as near as possible to the lock-expert but keeping a respectable distance between them.

She had first met the dark man in a shop when she went to buy some groceries for the lady of the house. She hadn't notice the dark man who was standing at the corner of the shop smoking. When she was about to leave, the dark man accosted her and blurted out some remark. He was wearing a resplendent red shirt tucked inside his lungis and had

combed his hair from the middle. Fascinated by his appearance she also responded to his remark. Thus, one thing led to another and ultimately she found the dark man to be one of her remote cousin, according to the evidence he set forth. Soon they became more intimate as the days passed and finally they fell in love with each other: or so it seemed. Then one day he asked her:

"Isn't Mr. Jalil, your employer, a very rich man?"

"Yes, indeed he is! He is an industrialist," she informed him. Then both of them maintained silence for some time. The dark man seemed to remain thoughtful for some time as if weighing a decision whether to pose another question.

"Aren't you tired of working as a maid? Don't you ever feel that you should now take a rest and settle with someone of

your choice?" Her eyes suddenly flashed in agreement.

"Oh, you have uttered just the right thing which I have long been suppressing in my heart."

Silence was resumed. The maid felt as if the dark man was fumbling to say something. "Will you marry me?" he proposed shyly breaking the silence.

At this, she bent her head in embarrassment and giggled daintily which revealed her light yellow teeth.

"Yes, I will."

"I am honoured and impressed. But the thing I am troubled with is that I don't have a job. So how am I going to support you? I need a steady flow of income to support both us and our future posterity. Don't you thing so?"

She nodded her head in accord but still her head remained bowed as if in defeat

and failure.

"What will you do then?" she asked quite confused at their conversation. she had no idea where it was leading to.

"Well, I have thought of a plan. I heard that your employer is going on a marriage ceremony the day after and won't return before midnight."

"So?"

"And so, my dear, my friend and I will trespass into the house and steal some money from the safe." He gave a cunning sort of smile.

"What nonsense are you talking about. You will steal what a disgrace! I didn't anticipate ..."

He interrupted and said:

"Don't worry. It's not what you are thinking. I am only going to remove your share from the safe. It's for our own good."

"But ..." she was very surprised by now.

—Till Next Week

The Lonely Bear

by Jasim Gani

DEEP in the forest there once lived a bear. He was lonely. He had no parents, friends or brothers, and he had to starve for he did not know how to hunt for food. So the poor bear somehow managed to survive on fruits.

When winter came he did not have any place to stay, so he suffered all winter living in the snow.

In spring the snow melted and because he was hungry he again went to look for food.

In his search for food he was suddenly attacked by a hunter who seemed very anxious to kill the bear. And the bear in a terrible fear was running for his life.

He had somehow survived from the hunter, but then he had realised that in his hurry

he had ran into an unknown forest.

He was so scared that he did not know what to do, but at that moment he suddenly heard "HELP! SOMEBODY HELP ME". The bear then quickly ran to that place. When he reached that place he saw that a little boy was crying and he was drowning in quicksand.

He broke a branch and gave one end of the branch to the boy, then when the boy grabbed the branch the bear quickly pulled the branch up and the boy with it.

Then the boy and the bear became friends. And because they became friends their biggest problem was also solved, because the boy also had no one. And now none of them were alone anymore.



Mystery at mandrake...

by Munazah Alam

Our heroes are now locked up in secret hiding place, their hands tied and their mouths gagged. The police have searched but in vain. Now what will happen ... Will they ever be found ...

Fortunately for us, Blake Cartridge and his fellow crooks thought that it was the twins' parents who had sent the police to Mandrake.

When the police left Jean, Diane and Billy were given lunch. It was then that the twins had written the message for their hands had been untied then. Some time after lunch all three had been bundled off to Working in a car.

By this time I had finished cutting through the ropes binding the twins and Billy. They got up off the bed, rubbing their wrists and ankles, while, I took out my newspaper and wire. There still wasn't any sign of Chris.

Luckily, the room we were in, unlike some of the others, was uncarpeted. I slid the newspapers under the door to the other side so that only a small portion remained in the room. Then with the wire I poked the key in the key-hole. A few minutes' effort and the key fell onto the newspaper with a thud. I pulled the paper back into the room and, picking up the key which came with it, unlocked the door. We all got out and I locked the door again, leaving the key in the lock.

Carefully and silently we made our way to the second floor. We met Chris just as she

was coming upstairs. She had found her flashlight. Quiet reigned in Humphrey's Cottage.

We got out of the house as we had entered, through the coal-hole, without further incident and made our way stealthily, to the rope we had left hanging from the tree. The 'cottage' remained silent.

"I think I hear something." For the first time Billy spoke. We all stopped abruptly and stood still as statues.

"What ...?" Chris began but I interrupted her.

"Shh! I think — a helicopter!"

"Yes, it's a chopper!" exclaimed Diane.

"Quick! Run for those trees! This whole place will be lit up in a few seconds!" Even as Chris spoke, lights came on all around us. Luckily we managed to reach the trees just in time.

Some way ahead of us was a large area clear of trees. We had not noticed that before.

As we looked on in tense silence a helicopter came into view, and descended on the flat strip of land. We felt the wind on our faces. Dust rose from every direction and stung our eyes and skins. The sound became deafening and I clamped my hands down on my ears.

By the time the helicopter touched the ground a small receiving party had emerged from the 'cottage' and was standing at the edge of the trees. The chopper door opened and one by one four men stepped out. They were escorted into the house by the hosts. The helicopter rose again and disappeared into the dark night. The lights were switched off, and once more, it was dark like before.

Once our eyes became accustomed to the dark we started to move again. We did not have any trouble in finding our rope or in climbing over the fence, though Billy did

have to be pushed up in spite of his protests that he could manage on his own. But that was neither here nor there.

As soon as we were out of earshot and out of sight of Humphrey's Cottage we hastened to Chris' car. On our way back to Marlow, between the two of us, Chris and I filled out the twins on our side of the story.

When we arrived at Marlow, instead of going home, Chris drove straight to the police station.

"We're going to make the police believe us this time," she explained. "Now that we have Billy with us can make them."

Chief Kinnane was on duty. As I had expected he didn't believe anything we said. But, in the end, he agreed to let Billy telephone his parents.

The next day Jean, Diane, Chris and I were going over the happenings of the past few days.

—Till Next Week

Jokes

A man had been playing his stereo very loudly. His neighbour rushed in to complain.

"If you don't stop playing that stereo I'll go crazy," he said.

His neighbour smiled. "Too late," he said. "I turned it off half an hour ago."

"Madam, your husband has just been run over by a steam roller."

"Slip him under the door, will you? I'm on the telephone."

Man on telephone: Hello, is that 555? Can you ring the fire brigade for me — I've got my finger stuck in the dial.

Bet You Didn't Know

In 1948 the last army of Costa Rica, in Central America, was abolished. The President explained that the army was not needed in that peace loving country.

Pirates first began piercing their ears and wearing earrings on one ear because they believed that it improved their eyesights.

The first processing for the films in Kodak hand cameras meant sending the whole camera along with the film to be developed into photographs.

Peace On Earth

Peace on earth. What does it mean?

It means much more Than the handshake between two nations.

Peace on earth. It cannot be seen. It can only be felt in our hearts.

We together, people of all nations. Are one gigantic family. We must destroy the boundaries that lay between us And vibrate together in harmony.

With God, our Creator, to guide us, And our hearts filled with love, And though some of us die and some of us live, Through the sorrows and the joys of victory, We must live together in peace forever, We must live in peace eternally.

The earth may seem like a huge place And each one of us a tiny dot, But together we make up a big family. And each other is who we've got.

We must live and work together, We must have faith and hope, We must live in joy and harmony, And that is peace on earth.

Anjum Hossain, Student of 5th Grade in the US.

QUIZ CLUB

Here are this week's quiz questions. Remember to send your answers with your name and address no later than next Thursday.

1. What is the scientific name for wolf?
2. What is abiotology?
3. Name the Roman goddesses of the dawn, identified with the Greek 'Eos'?
4. What is the Russian name for Mickinley, Mount of Alaska?
5. Which country was previously called Bechuaneland?
6. Which city had the old name Edo?
7. Where did the Third international comintern form in 1919?
8. What is the name of the only species of monkey found in Europe?
9. Name the French sculptor of the Statue of Liberty.
10. Who was the last monarch of Egypt?

Here are the answers of April 3rd's Quiz Club:

1. Rainwater taht is made acid by chemical gases.
2. Martin Crowe.
3. Venice.
4. Alexander Graham Bell.
5. Pasa.
6. Planets between Mars and Jupiter.
7. Bonn, Germany in 1770.
8. Bimal.
9. Keokradang.
10. Pakistan.

TOM 'n' MOM in "BITTER QUESTION" by Sanjida Shahood Class-x



Fill out this form and send it to us, and you will be a member of the Rising Star Club. Send in your writings, illustrations, and cartoons. It is an ideal opportunity to express yourself through the print media.

Name:

Father's Name:

School:

Class:

Full Address:

Telephone No.