The Throne of Fire
The Graphic Novel
Rick Riordan
Adapted and Illustrated by Orpheus Collar
Additional Illustration by Cam Floyd
Color Flatting by Aladdin Collar
Lettered by Chris Dickey

Disney Hyperion
Los Angeles New York
The job was supposed to be simple: sneak into the Brooklyn Museum, borrow a particular Egyptian artifact, and leave without getting caught.

No, it wasn’t robbery. We would have returned the artifact eventually. But I guess we did look suspicious.

We had to try. We had to steal—sorry, borrow—the artifact. Then we had five days to figure out how to use it. I just love deadlines.

Not to be dramatic, but the world was at stake!
Hi, Carter Kane here.

And I’m Sadie Kane.

We’re siblings, even though we look nothing alike.

Last Christmas, we discovered we were blood of the pharaohs, imbued with magical skills.

We used them to defeat the god of chaos Set, only to find he had been manipulated by a greater threat, the serpent Apophis, the entire time.

Last time we tried to save the world, we had the help of gods.

Wall Stone was our first trainee. The guy’s a natural sau—a charm maker.

Jaz was a cheerleader from Nashville. She follows the path of the lion goddess, Sekhmet, and is a natural healer.

Khufu is our pet baboon.

Since then, we’ve trained new magicians.

ALL CLEAR!

CMON! THE EGYPTIAN WING IS THIS WAY

KHFU, STAY UP THERE AND KEEP WATCH!

What else? Let’s see. The Egyptian gods are running around loose in the modern world; a bunch of magicians called the House of Life are trying to stop them; and a big snake is about to swallow the sun and destroy the world.
IS THAT A GRIFFIN?

YEAH. GRIFFINS WERE PROTECTORS. THEY GUARDED TREASURES AND STUFF.

FAB. SO YOU MEAN THEY ATTACKED... OH, THIEVES, FOR INSTANCE, BREAKING INTO MUSEUMS AND STEALING ARTIFACTS?

IT'S JUST A FRIGEZE.

The Egyptian artifacts brought back all kinds of memories.

I shuddered when we passed a statue of Horus—the falcon-headed god who'd inhabited my body last Christmas.

I'd hosted the winged goddess Isis.

Carter, you still haven't told us why we need this "BOOK OF RA" so badly.

We need it to wake Ra. He's been in exile for millennia, and we'll need his power on our side when the lord of chaos, the serpent Apophis, escapes from his bonds.

But how do we find it?

I think—- we already have.
That doesn't look like a book to me, more like a moose.

It's not a moose! Khnum was one aspect of the Sun God.

Ra had three different personalities. He was Khnum, the Scarab God in the morning; Ra during the day; and Khnum, the Ram-Headed God, at sunset, when he went into the underworld.

And who's the little guy in front?

That's us! According to legend, Khnum made humankind from a potter's wheel.

This statue shows Khnum creating a new life.

My hunch is this is where we'll find the scroll.

I pulled out my wand.

W'pah!

*Sigh*

Sadie, no! It might be booby.

--Trapped?

Mission accomplished.
The flames took on the form of bau, sickness spirits. Jaz knew exactly what these seven were called....

The arrows of Sekhmet, born from the goddess, I can stop them.
Um... Jaz? They don't look like they want to be stopped. Let's get out of here!

No! If they escape this room, they could kill innocent people!

Good point.

I can channel the power of Sekhmet and force them back to the magical realm, the Duat. It's what I've been training for.

I don't know, Jaz. That's a big spell.

Freak! Any hints on fighting griffins? Avoid the sharp parts?

Freak!
I held out my hand, and a symbol blazed above my palm—a symbol I could always summon. The Eye of Horus.

STOP!!

Griffins pulled Horus’s chariot in battle, which gave me an idea.

WALT, YOU STILL GOT YOUR BOAT AMULET?

MY—P YEAH, BUT THERE’S NO WATER.

JUST SUMMON THE BOAT! I’VE GOT AN ESCAPE PLAN.

Meanwhile, Jaz ran toward the Arrows of Sekhmet.

JAZ, DON’T!

I CAN CONTAIN THEM!
CARTER, I FOUND THE BOAT AMULET.

AWESOME! CAN YOU ACTIVATE IT?

I'M JUST GOING TO PUT THIS AROUND YOUR NECK. DON'T FREAK.

OH, NO.
Jaz contained all the bau into a fissure in the ground.

But it was too much.

Her staff crumbled and she fell.

Wall set his boat amulet on the ground and spoke the command word.

Voilà! Like one of those crazy expand-in-water sponge toys, the amulet grew into a full-size Egyptian reed boat.

With shaking hands, I took the two ends of the griffin’s new necktie and tied one end to the boat’s prow and one to the stern.

READY TO GO!

SADIE! HOW’S JAZ?
Jaz took something from her magician’s bag—a wax figurine—and pressed it into my free hand.

**Um... Not well!**

**Jaz!**

**You’ll need this soon, Sadie. I’m sorry. I can’t help you more.**

**You’ll know what to do when the time comes.**

**Sadie, we need to get her out of here!**

**Hey! What are you—hey! Stop!**

**Go! Up!**

**Eeek!**
We got out of the Brooklyn Museum in the nick of time, just as police helicopters and emergency vehicles swept in to clean up our mess.

So much for an easy job.

Then again, we were the Kane family. This was the easiest day we were going to have for quite a while.
I steered the griffin toward our home.

To mortal eyes, Brooklyn House looked like a dilapidated warehouse down under the Manhattan Bridge.

But to magically trained eyes, the true form was revealed. Neat trick, eh?

Go! Get Jaz inside. I can handle the griffin.
Carter’s understanding of “handle the griffin” was different from mine, but I didn’t say anything.

DOWN, BOY!

Our initiates were an assortment of ages from around the world. Most were between ten and fifteen.

WHAT HAPPENED?

The thing we all had in common: the blood of the pharaohs.

SOMEBODY GOT HURT?

All of us were descended from Egypt’s royal lines, which gave us a natural capacity for magic and hosting the power of the gods.
Felix was just nine. He'd shown a talent for summoning penguins and not much else... yet.

Sean, from Dublin.

Alyssa, from Carolina.

There was Julian, from Boston.

And Cleo, from Rio de Janeiro (yes, I know, Cleo from Rio, but I'm not making it up!).

STILL BREATHING--

MAYBE THERE'S A SPELL IN THE LIBRARY...

AGH! OOO-AHG-AHG!

Kufu tried to revive Jaz with baboon magic without success.

LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF MAGICAL COMA!

IT'S NOT WORKING, KUFU....

Poor Jaz. What had she slipped in my bag before passing out?

“Quick, let's get her to the infirmary!”

“You'll need this soon,” she'd told me.

As far as I knew, Jaz was not a diviner. She couldn't tell the future. But she was a healer....
I recognized the likeness immediately. Jaz had crafted a figurine of Carter!

Based on its fine craftsmanship, I deduced it should only be saved for life-or-death situations.

Staring at the mini-Carter, I had a horrible feeling my brother’s life had been quite literally placed in my hands.

**The Book of Ra is a dangerous artifact.**

**Be careful with that, Sadie.**

**Oh, hi Bast.**

Bast knew a thing or two about Ra, having served as his battle cat for thousands of years, fighting the serpent alongside him.

Now she lived at Brooklyn House, as our resident cat goddess and adult chaperone.

The scroll should only be opened in the daylight. When the power of Ra is easier to control.

We'll discuss over breakfast in the morning.

Get some sleep you've got a big day tomorrow.

Right. Thanks for remembering.

When the sun rose tomorrow I'd be thirteen years old. Nothing like a birthday to put the impending apocalypse into perspective.

Good griffin, sleepy griffin...if you want to crash here tonight, we can set up a nest for you on the roof.

Before Carter sprung the Brooklyn Museum mission on us, I'd been making plans to celebrate my birthday in London. Now, I wasn't so sure.
I’d boarded with my grandparents in London for six years before moving to Brooklyn, and I thought it’d be a great present to myself to return.

My closet was plastered with photos, mostly of family...

...and one god. Anubis.

True confession, I had a little bit of a crush on Anubis. Not the dog-headed boy in my picture...

...but the sixteen-year-old I’d met on our Red Pyramid adventure.

Anubis had seemed interested in me, but I hadn’t heard from him in months!

No matter! In the weeks since Walt Stone had arrived, I’d thought I might be able to get over Anubis.

The first time I saw Walt, I felt a spark between us.

Finally, there were my London people.

At least, that had been the plan before Carter dropped the ‘have to raise Ra’ guest. Now who knew what would happen?

Gran and Gramps had invited me to visit for my birthday, and I had plans to go out with just my mates--

My life was rubbish; I flopped into bed.
At Brooklyn House, we sleep with magic charms to protect us against the occasional urge our souls--or ba, if you want to get Egyptian about it--get to wander out of our bodies.

Sometimes those calls are important, so I let my spirit go where it wanted to take me.

I found myself in a familiar underground chamber: the Hall of Ages, in the House of Life's main headquarters, under Cairo.

The Hall of Ages was so long, it could've hosted a marathon. Between its columns, curtains of light shimmered--holographic images from Egypt's history.

The light changed color to reflect different eras, from the gold glow of the Age of the Gods all the way to the crimson light of modern times.

At the end of the hall, seated at his post at the foot of the pharaoh's vacant throne, sat the leader of the House of Life, and my least favorite magician:

Michel Desjardins.
The last time I’d seen Monsieur Delightful, he threatened to execute Carter and me if we continued to break the House’s most important law by interacting with gods of Egypt.

His face was gaunt. He studied the bloodred images in the curtains of light as if he were waiting for something.

The crimson tint of the modern age was darkening. To a deep purple.

A new age...

...a darker age.

The color of the light has not changed for a thousand years, Vladimir.

It is the Kanes, of course!

Est-il alle?

Yes, my lord... he used the portal moments ago. Finally, he has gone.

But if you ask me...

"Yes, he gone?"

You should’ve killed Amos Kane while he was in our power!
NO, VLADIMIR. HE WAS UNDER OUR PROTECTION.

ALL WHO SEEK HEALING MUST BE GIVEN SANCTUARY—EVEN KANE.

BUT SURELY NOW THAT HE HAS LEFT, WE MUST ACT.

YOU HEARD THE NEWS FROM BROOKLYN, MY LORD. THE KANES ARE TEACHING THE PATH OF THE GODS TO A NEW GENERATION. AND NOW, THEY SEEK TO RAISE RA!

YES, VLADIMIR. BUT WE MUST USE OUR POWER TO KEEP DOWN THE SERPENT APOPHIS. BEIDES, THE KANES ONLY HAVE ONE SCROLL—THEY NEED THREE.

THE CHILDREN WILL SEEK THE OTHER SCROLLS, MY LORD. IF THEY LEAVE THEIR STRONGHOLD AND COME INTO MY TERRITORY—

I WILL LEAVE THAT MATTER TO YOU. THE SECOND SCROLL IS IN YOUR POSSESSION. YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO DISPOSE OF THE KANES SHOULD THEY SEEK TO STEAL IT.

EXCELLENT! BUT WHAT OF THEIR INITIATES IN BROOKLYN?

THEM HAVE LEARNED THE FORBIDDEN MAGIC OF THE GODS... AND HAVE LOYALTY TO THE KANES...

WE MUST ATTACK BEFORE THEY BECOME A STRONG FORCE AGAINST US.

Desjardins turned to contemplate the swirling light of the new age, and my body swirled into the currents of the Duat, back to my physical form.

I WILL CHOOSE THE TIME TO ATTACK, VLADIMIR.

NOW, LEAVE ME. I MUST THINK.

It was morning. Time to see what could be done with the Book of Ra.
Breakfast that morning was just like any other at Brooklyn House... except we now had a pet griffin nesting on the roof, our initiate Jaz was in a magical coma, we held a scroll to wake the most powerful god of them all, and Apophis was due for an awakening.

Hey, Sadie, is something up?

This stupid scroll we stole... I can't read it.

I can recognize the hieroglyphs, but I can't make sense of them.

Why, Bast? You knew Ra personally; what does it mean?
Ra's priests created the Book of Ra in ancient times and kept it secret, dividing it into three parts, to reflect the three aspects of Ra—morning, noon, and night.

The pieces graft together, it is readable only when all three sections are joined.

This is the Scroll of Kanum. You'll need to find the other two now.

I think I may have a lead.

I had a bar trip last night in the Hall of Ages.

Des Jardins was conspiring with a man with burnt-out eyes.

Vladimir, I think his name was.

Des Jardins told Vladimir to protect the second scroll. If we can figure out where his stronghold is, we'd be closer to winning.

What exactly happens if Apophis escapes?

Apophis will swallow the sun.

All civilization—everything humans have built since the dawn of Egypt—will freeze over in infinite darkness and be reborn in the image of chaos.

That's not all. Vladimir wanted Des Jardins to organize an assault on Brooklyn House to kill us... and our initiates... for teaching the path of the gods.

It sounded like a slaughter.
A wave of shock spread around the breakfast table as our initiates contemplated what it would mean to be attacked by experienced sorcerers many times their age.

SO... WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE, THEN?

BUT... WE'RE NOT READY!!!

WE HAVEN'T BEEN FULLY TRAINED...

A light flashed behind Sadie and me as a familiar figure stepped through the portal.

INITIATES, BY THE TIME THE HOUSE OF LIFE ATTACKS, YOU WILL BE READY. EACH OF YOU.

It had been Amos's idea that we recruit in the first place. He did that before leaving for Egypt on his...

Hmm, what do you call it when someone goes for healing after being possessed by an evil god? Not a holiday, I suppose.

UNCLE AMOS! YOU'RE BACK!

THAT I AM. I SEE YOU'VE RECRUITED!

CHILDREN, I KNOW I'VE JUST ARRIVED, BUT I PROMISE WE'LL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

I WILL OVERSEE YOUR TRAINING WHILE CARTER AND SADIE SEEK OUT THE REMAINING SCROLLS IN THE BOOK OF RA.

SADIE, THE MAGICIAN YOU SAW IN YOUR VISION WAS NAMED VLADIMIR MENSHIKOV.

INITIATES, THIS IS OUR UNCLE AMOS. HE'S BEEN... STUDYING AT THE HOUSE OF LIFE.
Mensikov is descended from the priests of Amun Ra, who wrote the Book of Ra. He was once a hero of the House of Life, but in recent years his behavior has become more chaotic.

Mensikov attempted to access the Book of Ra and burned his eyes horribly in the process. He claimed he was trying to destroy it, but I have other suspicions.

It’s a matter of public record within the House of Life that he holds the second scroll in the Book of Ra, the same that disfigured him.

Mensikov’s territory, and the next scroll, is in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Your time is limited. There are four days before the spring equinox, when the hours of day and night are exactly balanced, and the balance of Ma’at and chaos can be easily tipped one way or another.

The order of the universe.

We can’t wait to act. The equinox is also the perfect time for Apophis to escape his prison and invade the mortal world. You can be sure he has minions working on that right now.

So it’s a trip to Russia, then? I’ll get packed. We can leave in an hour.

No.

*The order of the universe.*
I said, no! It’s my birthday, and I’m taking it off.

I’ve been planning my trip to London for ages. The bloody Equinox isn’t for four days, and besides, it’ll take time for the House of Life to prepare their forces for an attack.

I think I have time for one bloody day off before the world ends.

Sadie, a visit to London is dangerous. However, if you must...

...then at least promise you’ll be careful. I doubt Menshikov will be ready to move against us so quickly.

You should be all right if you do nothing to attract attention.

Amos!

I promise!

Thank you, Amos.

I think that’s enough for one morning. We will prevail, with the gods on our side, Mayat will overcome chaos, as it always has before.

The main thing is for all of you to continue your training. We’ll need you in top shape to defend Brooklyn House.

The initiates cleared the breakfast table, but I lingered behind. Couldn’t Sadie see how selfish a London trip was?
ARE YOU COMING TO RUSSIA WITH US, BAST?

... NO. I WILL REMAIN HERE WITH AMOS TO PROTECT THE INITIATES FROM HARM, BUT I WON’T LEAVE YOU UNDEFENDED.

I’VE CONTACTED A FRIEND OF SORTS TO WATCH OVER YOU AND SADIE ON YOUR GUEST.

Sadie took the morning portal out to London, from our gateway on the roof, closing it for the next twelve hours.

I wanted to keep things as normal as possible for the trainees, so I led my usual morning class. I called it Magic Problem-Solving 101. The trainees called it “whatever works.”

I gave the trainees a problem. They could solve it any way they wanted. As soon as they succeeded, they could go.

The training room took up most of the second floor. Aside from a nice collection of weapons, we’d stuck statues of Ra on the baseline walls and hollowed out their sundisk crowns so we could use them as basketball hoops.

OKAY, GUYS, TODAY WE’LL START WITH A SIMPLE COMBAT SIMULATION.
Each of you have Shabti in front of you.
At my command, they'll grow and attack.

Your goal: defeat them!

Felix, no penguins this time.

Aw, c'mon!

READY? BEGIN!

*Magical figurines that come to life when summoned.

Julian channeled the power of Horus, taking out the first shabti with a glowing fist.
True to Alyssa's spell, her shabti missed every shot...

"Miss!"

Felix went the simple and violent route.

She put it out of its misery.

YOU didn't say we had to use magic.

C'MON, Walt, kill it already.

YOU'VE got this!

FAIR enough.

WALT!

LOOK out!
The floor shook. I thought maybe Walt's magic was spreading into the building, which couldn't have been good.

Walt didn't know.
Ten feet above me, our godly basketball hoop was... compromised.

CARTER, THE RA STATUE!
GET AWAY! IT'S FALLING!

Falling? More like crumbling--and not into stone pieces.

THEY'RE... SCARAB SHELLS?
A messenger of Apophis burst from the shells.

CARTER KANE! ABANDON YOUR FOOLISH QUEST!

GIVE ME THE SCROLL.

IF YOU PERSIST, I WILL DESTROY THE GIRL YOU SEEK!

SHE SLEEPS IN THE PLACE OF RED SANDS, BUT SHE WILL DIE THERE IF YOU FOLLOW YOUR POINTLESS QUEST.

The girl I seek?

The spirit could only be talking about Zia Rashid.

NO... I DON'T GIVE IN TO DEMONS.

VERY WELL, I WILL DESTROY YOU MYSELF!

KILL IT!!
Right about then, it sucked to be the serpent.

Julian's sword sliced off one of its heads.

Felix's shoe bounced off another.

A blast from Walt turned the third to dust.

Then Alyssa summoned a ton of stone to bury the monster.

CARTER, THAT WAS PART OF THE LESSON, RIGHT?

TELL ME THAT WAS PART OF THE LESSON.

YES... JUST A TEST.

I looked at Walt, and we came to a silent agreement: we needed to talk about this later.

But first, I had some questions of my own to answer. CLASS DISMISSED.
After a brisk walk I stood in front of my grandparents’ flat. It seemed so odd to be...home? I couldn’t really call it that anymore.

Nervously, I knocked on the door. No answer.

I was sure they were expecting me. I knocked again.

GRAN?
GRAMPS?
CReeeek...

SLAM

My mind was just beginning to process a thought—I am in danger—when the front door slammed shut behind me.

If I had any blood of the pharaohs, it was turning to ice.

The smell of rotting meat wafted from upstairs.

WELCOME HOME, SADIE KANE.
I’VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...

The living room was dark and empty. Gramps’s television flickered with static, which wasn’t right.

Gramps always kept the rugby matches on, even if he wasn’t watching.
A goddess with black feathers who smells like death and who waits for something to die so she can eat it?

I KNOW YOU.

YOU'RE THE VULTURE GODDESS, NECKBUTT, IS IT?

IT'S NEKHIBET!

I'VE COME TO OVERSEER YOUR DEATH, WE GODS DISAPPROVE OF YOUR PLAN TO WAKE RA AS LEADER OF THE BATTLE AGAINST APOPHIS.
You would bring back that wizened old carcass of a Sun God. You would place a weak Pharaoh on the throne of the gods.

So you mean to kill me before I can, then, is that it?

Oh, we vultures don't do that.

We prefer to follow a nice big predator around, you know, and wait for it to do the killing.

From upstairs came a muffled crash—as if a large piece of furniture had been thrown out of a window, Gramps shouted.

No! No-o-o-o-o!

And you haven't even said hello to dear old Gramps yet.

The last of my courage melted into my combat boots.

Good-bye!
My morning lesson had been crashed by a three-headed snake demon, but there was one huge takeaway from it.

A few months ago, I'd fallen for a girl by the same name, who turned out to be a Shabti replica of the real Zia.

Falling in love for the first time had been hard enough. But when the girl you like turns out to be ceramic and cracks to pieces before your eyes—well, it gives "breaking your heart" a new meaning.

I had to rescue the real Zia.

All I knew was that her old mentor, Iskandar, had put her into a magical sleep and hidden her somewhere to keep her safe.

But I had no idea where the real Zia was—until now.

I consulted my scrying bowl.

It could show me anything I could visualize that wasn’t disguised by magic. But places I’d never been to were hard to see. Still, I had to try.

"She sleeps in the place of red sands," the demon had said.

I passed my hand over the saucer and imagined the place of red sands.

Nothing happened.

The oil showed me only my own reflection.
Knock knock.
How's the bowl working for you?

Hi, Walt. It's working fine. How are you feeling?

What do you mean?

The training room incident, the three-headed snake. What did you think I meant?

Oh, heh-heh. I guess it now knows our abilities.

It learned Felix throws a mean shoe.

Yeah—...but your abilities were the standout!

That gray light you blasted the snake with.

And the way you handled the Shabti practice dummy, turning it to dust...?

Healthier for you?

Sometimes I wonder why I came here, the timing...it's like a bad joke.

Things are complicated for me, Carter, and the future...I don't know.

You're one of our best!

If it's something about the way Sadie and I are teaching--

Of course not. You've been great, and Sadie--
She likes you a lot. I know she can come on a little strong. If you want her to back off...

No, it's nothing about Sadie! I like her too. I'm just--

At the mention of Sadie's name, the scrying oil began to change and stir. Wha...?

The surface of the scrying oil erupted in flames.

Sadie's in trouble!

We have to get to London!

Do you have any transportation amulets?

Way ahead of you. We'll ride the jet stream as gusts of wind!

Thanks to my trusty Shu* amulet.

*God of the Winds.

Swishhh
Bobby? No, that's not right. Babi, the bloody god of baboons. Plus Nekhbet! Two gods mad at me for wanting to raise Ra.
With hindsight, I can now appreciate just what a miserable birthday I was having, but at the time I was too paniced to feel properly sorry for myself.

I raced around the corner of South Colonnade...

...and plowed straight into my best mates, Liz and Emma.

AHH! SADIE! WHAT'S WRONG?

NICE TO SEE YOU, TOO. WHERE ARE YOU RUSHING OFF--

I'LL EXPLAIN LATER!

UNLESS YOU'D LIKE TO BE RIPPED APART BY A GOD NAMED BOBBY, FOLLOW ME!

IS THIS ONE OF YOUR JOKES?

A GOD?

TWO GODS, ACTUALLY! THEY'VE TAKEN OVER MY GRAN AND GRAMPS. THEY WANT TO KILL ME.

NOW, UNLESS THERE ARE ANY MORE QUESTIONS--RUN!

BUT I'M WEARING HEELS! LOSE THEM!
We lost Babi at a busy intersection.

Maybe he’d inherited Gramps’s absentmindedness and bad eyesight.

The good news: London’s modern-day streets were a distraction for Babi.

I wouldn’t have paid it much attention if a voice inside the yard hadn’t whispered:

SADIE.

We paused by a little church.

STEP INTO MY TERRITORY, WE NEED TO TALK, AND THERE ISN’T MUCH TIME.
Anubis,

Much better looking than a jackal, eh?

Who--

Ah--?

Liz and Emma are not known for being smooth around good-looking boys. In fact, their brains more or less cease to function.

Um, wait by the gate? I'll be right back.

Pleasure to see you again, Sadie.

Nice to see him? Not so much. He'd pretty much disappeared since last time I saw him.

Are you running to St. Petersburg? The second section of the Book of Ra is sitting there.

But be mindful, it's a trap, Menshikov is hoping to bait you.

I've got bigger problems than the Book of Ra at the moment. Two gods have possessed my grandparents. If you want to lend a hand--

Sadie, I can't intervene.

Er... nice to see you, too.

Yeah, no--
I told you when we first met, this isn’t an actual physical body.

I can manifest in places of death, like this graveyard, but there is very little I can do outside of them here in the mortal realm.

However—

Take this. It will help.

Not against Neith or Babi, but in your greater quest to awaken Ra.

It’s a netjeri blade, made from meteoric iron. It’s used for a ceremony called the opening of the mouth.

Yes, well, if I survive the day, I’ll be sure to take this razor and open someone’s mouth. Thanks ever so much.

Well, then, god of pretty much nothing useful, anything else before I get myself killed?

Take the underground. There’s a station half a block south. They won’t be able to track you very well below the earth.

Oh, and I told your driver to come get you at Waterloo Station.

My driver?

Bast couldn’t join you on your quest to find the book of Ra, so she called on a friend to chaperone you.
I'm sorry I can't do more. Now, go!

And Happy Birthday, Sadie.

I should've been very cross with Anubis. Kissing me without permission—the nerve! But I stood there, paralyzed.

As he melted into mist and disappeared, the graveyard became normal again—part of the regular, unshimmery world.

There they go! Kill them!

Sadie, come on!

To Waterloo Station!

We bolted for the Canary Wharf tube station, my lips still tingling from my first kiss.

And if I was humming "Happy Birthday" and smiling stupidly as I fled for my life—well, that was nobody's business, was it?
On the train, I gave my maes the shortest recap possible—how I’d discovered my ancestry as a magician and left London. I told them about the rise of Apophis, and our insane idea to awaken the god Ra.

Sadie, we believe you! I’ve never heard you talk so seriously about anything.

You—you’ve changed.

It’s more than that.

You seem older, more mature.

Their voices were tinged with sadness, and I realized my mates and I were growing apart.

Babi and Nekhbet caught up with us at Waterloo Station.

Outside in the cab stand, a strange little man held a placard with my name on it.

Kill the Kane, Babi!

Was that the driver Anubis had mentioned?

About time! Sadie Kane? I’m Bast’s friend. Called in to help you out!
THAT'S NICE, BUT WE'RE KIND OF BEING CHASED RIGHT NOW!

SADIE KANE

NOT A PROBLEM. I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT.

ROAARR!!

LET ME JUST PUT ON MY UGLY OUTFIT.

COVER YOUR EYES, MY FRIENDS... THIS WON'T BE PRETTY!

SHH-RRIP!!
Our driver released a magic blast of pure ugly so strong, it tore the essences off my grandparents.

**BOO!**

**OH, DEAR!**

**HA-HA!**

**FEW CAN WITHSTAND A FULL-FRONTAL BOO!**

I could see why. He was still uglier than anyone else on the planet.

**YEP, I CAN SCARE AWAY ALMOST ANYTHING—SPIRITS, DEMONS, EVEN OTHER GODS—**

Which is why the Egyptian commoners loved me.

**GRAN, ARE YOU OKAY?**

Suddenly, a huge wind picked up.

**SWISHH**
LET SADIE GO! OR I’LL DESTROY YOU!

SHOULD I FRIGHTEN HIM?

NO! I’LL HANDLE IT.

PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.

I’M BES, AND I’LL BE YOUR DRIVER TO ST. PETERSBURG.

BES?!

LIZ, EMMA, I’M SO SORRY ABOUT ALL THIS!

SORRY? THIS WAS THE BEST BIRTHDAY PARTY EVER!

GO! WE’LL MAKE SURE YOUR GRANDPARENTS MAKE IT HOME OKAY.

THE NAME SOUNDED FAMILIAR.

THERE’S A PORTAL ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN. NOW, HOP IN THE LIMO!

BLOODY EGYPTIAN GODS IN THEIR BLOODY REVEALING SWIMSUITS!

BYE, SADIE!
I couldn’t believe our chauffeur was Bes.

I used to laugh about his pictures in museums—his bulging eyes, wagging tongue, and general lack of clothing.

We traded stories on the ride through London. After hearing what Sadie had been through, I didn’t feel so bad about my day.

When a big park opened up, Bes jumped the curb and drove straight over the grass.

Here it is, the site of our portal to St. Petersburg.

These sphinxes were built for the grand exhibition of British imperial might back in 1851. All great empires want a piece of Egypt. This is where you get out, right, Walt?
Walt, I don’t mean... thank you. But--

It’s called S’he! The symbol that surrounds Ra’s sun crown, a never-ending loop, the symbol of Eternity!

Eternity?!

Yeah, um. I thought since you’re trying to find Ra, maybe it’ll bring you luck.

I meant to give it to you this morning, but... I kind of lost my nerve.

Walt’s not really. It’s just... I should help out at Brooklyn House.

It’s not that I want to go back--

--but you can’t go with us, go on, kid. It’s fine.

Sadie, about your birthday... here’s something I made for you.

S’he! The symbol of Ra! Happy Birthday, Sadie.

And remember, if you ever need me, your amulet’s linked to mine.
WE’VE GOT WORK TO DO!

The other end of the portal was snowier but just as sphinx-y.

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA, MARCH 18TH, MIDNIGHT.

FARhest-NORTH EGYPTIAN ARTIFACTS IN THE WORLD!

PILLAGED AND BROUGHT UP HERE TO DECORATE RUSSIA’S IMPERIAL CITY, ST. PETERSBURG, LIKE I SAID, EVERY NEW EMPIRE WANTS A PIECE OF EGYPT.

ACROSS THE RIVER, YOU CAN SEE MENSHIKOV’S STRONGHOLD—THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM.

I WON’T BE ABLE TO GO WITH YOU—MY GODLY PRESENCE WILL SET OFF ALL SORTS OF ALARMS.

ALSO, YOU WON’T BE ABLE TO SNEAK VERY FAR SHIVERING LIKE THAT.
THANKS, BES!

NOW, I DON'T KNOW WHAT AMOS TOLD YOU ABOUT MENSHIKOV--

--BUT IF IT IMPLIED ANYTHING OTHER THAN A SADISTIC TORTURER, AMOS WAS JUST BEING POLITE. IF YOU NEED TO FIND HIM, JUST LISTEN FOR THE BLOODCURDLING SCREAMS.

ALSO, IF YOU HAVE ANY STEALTH MAGIC, NOW'S THE TIME TO USE IT. GOOD LUCK! I'LL FIND YOU WHEN YOU'RE DONE.

We ran into the night.

Soon enough, we were at the front door of the Hermitage.

THIS LOOKS LIKE THE ENTRANCE. I DON'T KNOW ANY STEALTH MAGIC. HOW ABOUT YOU CARTER?

I DO! GET UNDER THIS BLANKET.

NOW I JUST SPEAK THE COMMAND WORD--

I'MUN!*

INSTANT INVISIBILITY SHROUD!

"Hide!"
Bloodcurdling screams. To find Menshikov, just follow the screaming.

Don’t fuss, Death-To-Corks, you know I need a sacrifice to summon such a major god. It’s nothing personal.

Major god?

The House of Life didn’t allow mortals to summon gods. It was the main reason Desjardins hated us.

Menshikov was supposedly his best bud. So what was he doing, breaking the rules?

Hurts! Served you for fifty years, master. Please!

Now, now, I have to use exegregation.

Only the most painful form of banishment will generate enough energy.
I NAME YOU DEATH-TO-CORKS, SERVANT OF VLADIMIR, HE WHO TURNS IN THE NIGHT.

AAAAAYEEEE!!!

HELLO, VLADIMIR. LONG TIME.

SET, WE NEED TO TALK.

SET! The god who almost destroyed North America in our Red Pyramid adventure.

IS HE MAD?

NEVER MIND THAT--

I THINK THAT'S THE SCROLL!
YOU WILL TELL ME THE SPELL FOR APOPHIS'S BINDINGS, SO HIS MINIONS AND I MAY FREE HIM. THE SPRING EQUINOX IS ALMOST UPON US!

THE BINDING FOR APOPHIS? I WONDER WHAT YOUR MASTER DESJARDIN WOULD THINK IF HE FOUND OUT YOUR REAL PLAN, AND THE SORT OF FRIENDS YOU KEEP.

DESJARDIN IS NOT MY MASTER... THE SERPENT IS SUPREME! NOW, WILL YOU DO AS I ASK, OR SHALL I COERCION?

OH, NO NEED FOR COERCION. I'LL COOPERATE!

LET'S SEE... WHAT DID RA USE FOR A BASE? SCARABS, LOTS AND LOTS OF SCARABS.

ALSO, A SACRIFICIAL VICTIM WOULD BE GOOD!

MAYBE A YOUNG IDIOT MAGICIAN WHO CAN'T DO A PROPER INVISIBILITY SPELL, LIKE CARTER KANE OVER THERE!

SET! I'LL KICK YOU IN THE BA FOR THAT!

EH?

KANES?!

Menshikov threw his staff to the ground, a very sure sign he was summoning up some trouble for us.
I’d really had enough snakes for one week.

Serpents are my specialty!

And this particular creature is my favorite: the Tjebu Heru.

Two hungry mouths to feed, two troublesome children. Perfect!

Too bad I’m stuck in this jar, or I may have to choose sides and help someone!

Crazy? I don’t think so.

Desperate? Yes!

Okay, set. You’re on.

Shut up, set. No one is crazy enough to trust you.

HA-D!!!*

***Destroy!!!***
NYET!

That's better! Thank you, Sadie Kane!

Do something, SBT! Get rid of the monster!

Oh, I'm much too fond of snakes to do something like that. I'll stay here and entertain Vladimir.
This was the final insult. Possess my grandparents, attack my friends, ruin my birthday...

But don’t ever hurt my brother.

Don’t ask me how I did it. Though I will say my magic’s stronger when I’m angry.

I didn’t think. I simply channeled all my rage and shock into my staff.

I couldn’t carry Carter by myself, but I had to get him out of there. We were in enemy territory. I needed to find Bes.
Let’s get your brother out of here, shall we?

Vladimir is not in a good mood.

Set volunteered to carry Carter, but I wasn’t about to let the god of chaos take full charge of my brother, so we dragged him between us.

Set chatted amiably about Jesus heru poison:

**Completely incurable!** Fatal in about twelve hours.

**Amazing stuff!**

And all the exciting ways the magicians might kill me once they caught up:

**Oh, you’re toast, my dear! A dozen senior magicians were rallying to Menshikov when I made my, er, strategic retreat!**

And his tussle with Menshikov:

**Six vases broken over his head, and he still survives!**

I envy his thick skull.

I could make things slightly easier for you, you know. We could make a deal.

One with more favorable terms than the deal we struck on our last meeting.

Last time I talked to Set, I’d gained possession of his secret name, part of his soul. I used it as leverage to make him stay away from Carter and me and to stop making trouble around the world.

It worked—but if there’s one thing gods of chaos don’t like, it’s being controlled.

You want me to give you back your secret name.

Bingo.
A secret name wasn’t just a name. It was the sum of the god’s experiences. The more you understood the god, the closer you got to knowing their secret name, and the more you could channel their power.

If you think I’d trade your secret name to get a couple of lousy Russian magicians off my tail, you’ve got another thing coming.

Perish the thought! I only hope to tell you the location of the final scroll in the Book of Ra.

That’s what you’re after, isn’t it?

Why would you know that?

Come now, Sadie. I was a loyal lieutenant of Ra.

If you were Ra, and you didn’t want to be bothered by any old magician trying to wake you...

...wouldn’t you trust the key to your location with your most fearsome servant?

Good point. Okay, where is it?

Not so fast. My secret name first, then the location.

It’s quite simple. Just say “I give you back your name.” You’ll forget the proper way to say it—

—and then I’ll have no power over you! You’ll kill me!

You have my word that I won’t.

You killed my dad!

Only so he could live a more meaningful afterlife as host to Osiris.

You’re out of good options, Sadie Kane. Meneshkov will find a way into Apophis’s prison in the Duat with or without help, and my bet is he’ll try on the equinox, two days from now.

When Carter dies from the Setju Heru’s venom you’ll be alone with no clue where to find the third scroll.

Another good point.

All right, set. But I’ll give you one last order.
You are not to harm the Kane family. You'll maintain the truce with us at least until… until Ra has been awakened. Or until you try and fail to awaken him?

If that happens, the world's over anyway. In exchange for your name, you will tell me the location of the last part of the Book of Ra, without trickery or deception. Then you'll depart for the Duat.

We have a deal. You'll find the Scroll in the wastelands of the Egyptian desert, my land, in a place called Bahariya.

I give you back your name. Now, my secret name, please.

Just like that, I felt the magic leave me. I still knew Set's name: “Evil Day.” But somehow I couldn't remember exactly how I used to say it, or how it worked in a spell. The memory had been erased.

I hope you live after all, Sadie Kane. You're quite amusing.

And just because I like you so much, I have a free piece of information for your brother.

Tell him Zia Rashid's village was called Al-Hamrah Makan.

Happy travels!

Gosh, thanks.

Why is that--
A block away, two white sports cars barreled toward us. A magician stuck his head out the sunroof of the lead car and pointed his staff in our direction.

"The closest portal to Bahariya is Alexandria, which is a tricky place to teleport to. It's Cleopatra's old capital, where the Egyptian empire fell apart, so magic tends to get twisted around."

"We have the second scroll, and I learned the location of the third is in a place called Bahariya. Bahariya?? Hope you can swim, kid."

"The only working portals are in the old city, which is off the coast, under thirty feet of water. Thirty feet underwater?"

"There's an Egyptian bridge over the Pontanka River. We'll access the Alexandria portal there."
Why was there an Egyptian bridge built over the Fontanka River? No idea. Don’t care—the only thing that mattered to me was that it could summon a portal.

WPBH!

* * Open! *

Hold your breath!
Next stop: The Mediterranean Sea!

On the other side, I had time to think: A teenager for less than a day, and I’m going to drown.

I blacked out.

But my boy did otherwise.
I opened my eyes to see my ba had been pulled into another realm. Ancient history?

No, Prehistoric. The Age of the Gods!

Beneath me, an old man sat on a throne of fire, writhing in agony. My first-ever glimpse of Ra.

ISIS!

Very well! I relent!

Release me from this poison. I relent. I relent.
Isis appeared, and I knew instantly she had brought me into this vision. There was something she wanted me to see here.

I know it was you who created the snake that bit me! That’s why no one else can find a cure.

You desire my throne for your husband, the Upstart Osiris.

Enough scheming and plotting, just cure the poison.

Gladly, my king, but I will need...

My secret name? Yes, I know.

Promise to heal me, and you will get all you desire...and more.

I swear to heal you.

Then approach, goddess.

Take my name!!!

Ayiee!!

Ra’s secret name was the sum of his experience, and even then, in those ancient times, Ra was unthinkably old. The fiery aura spread to Isis’s hand, traveling up her arm until her whole body was wreathed in flames.
Humph. You survived, now heal me.

Isis spoke a spell and the venom retreated from Ra's veins. The swelling subsided and the two fang marks closed.

Ra's eyes faded from molten to mortal.

At last, no pain. The exchange is complete. Now, I shall retire from this plane.

But mark my words, Isis—I will not return when your weak husband is usurped!

The balance between M'at and chaos will slowly degrade. Egypt itself will fall...

The names of her gods will fade to a distant memory.

When that day comes, remember how your greed and ambition caused it to happen.

Then, one day, the entire world will stand on the brink of destruction. You will cry out to Ra, and I will not be there.

Osiris would be murdered by his brother, Set. And though Isis's son Horus would one day retake the throne, someday, Ra's other predictions would come true as well.

With the benefit of hindsight, I could see Ra's words would come to pass.
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT.
MARCH 18TH, NOON.

GASP—

I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU’D NEVER WAKE UP.

SORRY FOR THE ROUGH ARRIVAL, BUT I PULLED YOU BOTH OUT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND GOT YOU TO THE HOTEL, DIDN’T I?

YEP, FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, PENTHOUSE SUITE! I CALLED IN SOME FAVOR TO GET US HERE.

IT’S ABOUT NOON, IT’S BEEN ALMOST TWELVE HOURS SINCE HE GOT BIT.

YOU’RE JUST IN TIME TO PAY YOUR FINAL RESPECTS TO CARTER.

NO! I THINK I JUST SAW A WAY TO HELP HIM.

I reached in my bag for the Carter Figurine Jaz had given me.

“You’ll need this soon,” she’d said.

CARVER, I CAN HEAL YOU, BUT I NEED YOUR HELP.

I NEED YOUR SECRET NAME.

I put one hand to Carter’s forehead, just as I’d seen Isis do to Ra.

You don’t just hand over your secret name. Even in sickness, his mind resisted me.

YOU CAN DO THIS, BROTHER. I LOVE YOU. ALL THE EMBARRASSING BITS, ALL THE ANNOYING BITS—A THOUSAND ZIAS MIGHT RUN AWAY FROM YOU IF THEY KNEW THE TRUTH.

BUT I WON’T.

I’LL STILL BE HERE. NOW, TELL ME YOUR NAME, YOU BIG IDIOT, SO I CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE.

With his last bit of willpower, he told me his name. (Of course, I won’t tell you what it is.)
I raised the wax figurine and spoke Carter’s secret name.

All of Carter’s life passed through my fingers. Ghostly memories of when we were children, living with our parents, moments I hadn’t shared with my brother. His worst fears passed through me, his most embarrassing secrets.

YOU DID IT, SADIE!

ICKTH

UH...

DID YOU JUST--

YEAH.

WITH MY SECRET NAME--

YEAH.

AND ALL MY SECRETS--

YEAH.

At that point, I should have changed my secret name to 
Embarrassed to Death by Sister, because that pretty much summed up my existence.

DON’T EVER RIDE ANOTHER BLOODY SNAKE MONSTER AGAIN!

SORRY. DID I MISS ANYTHING WHILE I WAS... ASLEEP?

WE HAVE THE LOCATION OF THE THIRD SCROLL.

SET HID IT IN BAHARIYA, AN OASIS ALSO CALLED VALLEY OF THE GOLDEN MUMMIES.

LET'S GO LOOK FOR IT!!

WAIT.

SET ALSO TOLD US THE LOCATION OF ZIA’S VILLAGE.

AL-HAMRAH MAKAN.

... MAKAN MEANS "RED" IN ARABIC.

AND AL-HAMRAH MEANS "THE SANDS."

THE PLACE OF RED SANDS! THAT’S WHERE ISKANDAR HID ZIA!
Now that I'd been in his mind, I knew he'd never rest until he'd found Zia. It went far beyond liking the girl. She was part of his destiny.

I HAVE TO SAVE HER.

CAN'T. WE'RE PRESSSED FOR TIME, KIDS.

THERE'S NOT ENOUGH OF IT TO DO A SAFE MISSION.

WE'LL HAVE TO SEPARATE. BES, YOU TAKE CARTER TO GO AFTER ZIA.

I'LL TRACK DOWN THE SCROLL.

SADIE, I PROMISED I'D WATCH OVER YOU AND KEEP YOU SAFE.

I CAN'T LET YOU GO ALONE INTO THE DESERT.

I unclasp my Shen necklace.

I won't go alone, Walt offered to help.

But... Walt can't go!

Our Shen amulets were connected.

With a bit of effort, I was able to literally pull him through the Duat to my side.

Quite a handy magic item---instant hot guy.

How will we find each other?

We'll meet back here. It shouldn't take longer than twenty-four hours for me to find the Scroll, you to find Zia's village, and both of us to get back to Alexandria.

Carter looked at me hopefully, but I think I knew even then that we wouldn't meet in Alexandria.

We were the Kanes, which meant everything would go wrong.
Bes and I found al-Hamrah Makan with the help of some Bedouins. They stopped their truck once we got near and refused to go farther.

They say this land's cursed. We'll go by foot from here.

The Bedouins agreed to return for us in a couple hours, and we waved our good-byes.

I don't see any other structures. We should check here for Zia.

Tell me about this girl. Why do you like her?

She trained Sadie and me. She's the greatest fire elementalist in the House of Life.

Her mentor Iskandar hid her away when the River Goddess Nephthys chose her as a host.

Hmm...

River Goddess inside a fire elementalist... bad combination!

Don't act in haste, kid...
IF YOU FREE HER, SHE COULD TURN TO WATER--OR DROWN!

WE CAN'T LEAVE HER LIKE THIS.

As I approached Zia's sarcophagus, the water began to shimmer. A current rippled down the sides, tracing the same symbol over and over, the symbol for Nephthys.

In her hands, she held a crook and flail, symbols for the pharaoh.

For three months, I'd dreamed of finding Zia. Now I was almost too scared to wake her. What if she woke up and decided that she hated me?

I wanted to believe she possessed shared memories with her sistri, so that she would remember the times we'd had together. But if she hadn't, I wasn't sure I could stand the rejection.

...and broke the spell!

Zia couldn't breathe.

NOW YOU DID IT, KID!

HER BODY IS REJECTING THE SPIRIT OF NEPHTHYS.

GET HER UPSTAIRS TO THE RIVER!

HKK-- HKK
I am sorry for using her as a host. It was a poor choice, which almost destroyed us both. Guard her well, Carter Kane.

I shall return to my proper body... the Nile River.

I tried mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Zia still couldn't breathe.

I did the only thing I could think of.

MKK HKK

Don't you dare kiss me!

Come with us, please. I'm your friend. We can protect you.

No one protects me!

I am a scribe in the house of life!
I'd never felt so much power come to me so easily—as if I were meant to be a king.

Holy mother nut!

That's Ra's crook and flail!

You're holding the power of the sun in your hands, kid!

You dare to use the symbols of Ra?

Ra's symbols?

I... I didn't mean to!

They were buried with you, Zia.

Wait, something's wrong here...

A blinding white cage appeared around Bes.

Aagh!

BES!?

Standing next to Bes were the two people I least wanted to see:

Michel Desjardins and Vlad Menshikov.

As I told you, Chief Lector, Kane's next move after stealing the book of Ra would be to find this poor girl and attempt to turn her!

We will bring this young heretic back to the first nome, where he will be given a fair trial—

And then, executed.

There was no place to go.

I couldn't run or hide, which gave me two options: surrender or fight.
Ra’s crook and flail allowed me power I hadn’t had since hosting Horus—a huge combat avatar.

Desjardins, listen. Menshikov’s a traitor. He summoned Set. He’s trying to free Apep.

Get out of here. Let me deal with Menshikov.

Deal with me?

How confident, by all means, Chief Lector. Let the boy try. I’ll be sure to pick up the pieces when I’m done.

Vladimir didn’t wait.

He stomped the ground, sending magic tendrils at me.

Vladimir, wait. It’s not your place—

Menshikov’s coils squeezed against my shielding.
I felt Menshikov's voice forcing its way into my mind.

Snake! You are a slithering reptile.

Pain racked my body. My blood turned cold.

I could feel my heart slowing, my vision darkening. The taste of venom filled my mouth.

Look, snake! She runs from you in horror, you vile creature!

No! Not a snake!

Stop!

Discontinue the spell, Vladimir! The boy can be contained in more humane ways.

Humane, my lord? He's barely human!
BAHARIYA, EGYPT.
MARCH 18TH, TWO HOURS EARLIER.

While Carter and Bee were busy being destroyed, Walt and I found Bahariya Oasis on a couple of magic camels, summoned by one of Walt’s amulets.

THE SCROLLS ARE GETTING HOT. I THINK WE’RE HERE.
WHY THE LONG FACE, WALT?
SORRY, I WAS... THINKING.

YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES TALKING HELPS.
IT’S HARD FOR ME TO TALK ABOUT IT.
I DIDN’T MEAN TO HIDES ANYTHING FROM YOU.

WELL, IT’S NOT TOO LATE.
LET’S GET THIS SCROLL.

IT SHOULD BE SOMEWHERE UNDERGROUND, I’M GUESSING.

THOSE MUMMIES LOOK DIFFERENT...

THEY SHOULD! BAHARIYA WAS A GRECO-ROMAN BURIAL GROUND. THEY ADOPTED THEIR OWN STYLE OF MUMMIES, DIFFERENT FROM THOSE IN EGYPTIAN SITES.
In the next chamber, we found nothing except a red lacquered box on a sandstone pedestal. On top of the box was a carved wooden handle shaped like a demonic greyhound with tall ears—the Set animal.

I walked straight up to the box, opened the lip, and grabbed the scroll inside.
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE NOTHING. WHATEVER YOUR SECRET IS, YOU CAN'T KEEP HIDING IT!

I'M CURSED, SADIE.

NOT JUST ME, MY ENTIRE ROYAL LINE. IT'S BEEN THAT WAY SINCE MY ANCESTOR AKHENATEN.

NOT THE SUN GOD RA-- THE ACTUAL SUN DISK, ATEN. THIS WAS UNTHINKABLE TO THE MAGICIANS OF THE TIME, ESPECIALLY THE PRIESTS OF AMUN-RA--

--SAME AS MENSHEIKOV IS DESCENDED FROM--

YEAH! WELL, THEY CURSED AKHENATEN AND HIS BLOODLINE.

HE WAS THE PHARAOH WHO DECIDED TO DO AWAY WITH ALL THE OLD GODS AND JUST WORSHIP ATEN, THE SUN.

AKHENATEN’S SON TUTANKHAMEN WAS THE FIRST TO DIE OF THE CURSE.

YOU'RE RELATED TO KING TUT?

THE CURSE PROGRESSES IN ME NO MATTER WHAT I DO. SOME DAYS IT'S NOT SO BAD. SOME DAYS MY WHOLE BODY IS IN PAIN. WHEN I DO MAGIC, IT GETS WORSE.

THAT'S HOW I GOT INTO TALISMANS AND AMULETS. THEY STORE THEIR OWN MAGIC, AND DON'T REQUIRE AS MUCH FROM THE USER.

SO THE MORE MAGIC YOU DO...

YOU IDIOT! WHY ARE YOU HERE, THEN?

YOU SHOULDN'TVE TOLD ME TO SHOVE OFF!

BES WARNED YOU TO STAY IN BROOKLYN.

WHY DIDN'T YOU LISTEN?

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?

...THE FASTER I DIE.

When Walt looked at me in that dusty tomb, his eyes were every bit as dark, fender, and sad as Anubis's.

I'M GOING TO DIE ANYWAY, SADIE.

I WANT MY LIFE TO MEAN SOMETHING, AND... I WANT TO SPEND AS MUCH TIME AS I CAN WITH YOU.
I almost didn’t come to Brooklyn when I got the Djed amulet—that calling card you guys sent—

It was like a cruel joke. You guys offered to train me for magic when I knew I wouldn’t survive longer than a year or two.

But the past two months I’ve felt like I’m actually living for the first time. And getting to know you...

I started worrying about small things. My clothes. Whether I brushed my teeth. I mean, I’m dying, and I’m worrying about my teeth.

You have lovely teeth.

That’s what I mean. A little comment like that, and I feel better. I don’t feel like I’m dying. I feel happy.

Ahem.

I see you found the Book of Ra! I am Ptah, its Guardian.

This is not my true form; I’m just borrowing this poor date farmer for a minute.

I thought you wouldn’t mind as he was coming down here to shoot you for trespassing on his runs.

You didn’t notice me when you passed by my statue?
I AM KNOWN AS A CREATION GOD AND AS THE OPENER OF DOORS, AND THERE’S A VERY IMPORTANT DOOR THAT YOU NEED.

YOUR BROTHER IS IN A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE. CAN YOU SEND US THERE?

THOUGHT YOU’D NEVER ASK.

WHAT WILL WE FACE ON THE OTHER SIDE?

ENEMIES AND FRIENDS, BUT WHICH ARE WHICH, I CAN’T SAY. IF YOU SURVIVE, GO TO THE TOP OF THE GREAT PYRAMID. THAT SHOULD DO NICELY FOR AN ENTRY POINT INTO THE DUAT.

YOU’LL NEED TO FOLLOW RAY’S JOURNEY ALONG THE RIVER OF NIGHT TO--

-Choke-

-losing control of host--

!!
I’ll admit I needed help. Bes was locked in a glowing fluorescent cage. Zia was convinced we were enemies. My sword and wand were gone. I was holding a stolen crook and flail. And two of the most powerful magicians in the world were ready to arrest me, try me, and execute me.

Just then, Sadie and Walt humbled upon Bes’s cage, and the bars broke into splinters of light.

HOW--
Mensikov’s and Dejardin’s expressions turned to astonishment, and they disintegrated on the spot.

YOU KILLED THEM!

NAH, JUST SCARED ‘EM BACK HOME. THEY MAY BE UNCONSCIOUS FOR A FEW HOURS WHILE THEIR BRAINS TRY TO PROCESS MY MAGNIFICENT PHYSIQUE, BUT THEY’LL LIVE. MORE IMPORTANT—

YOU TWO HAD THE NERVE TO ANCHOR A PORTAL ON ME? DO I LOOK LIKE A RELIC?

IT WASN’T OUR IDEA. PTAH SENT US HERE TO HELP YOU... AFTER WE GOT THE THIRD SCROLL!

NICE WORK, SADIE!

IS THAT... ARE YOU THE REAL ZIA?
GET AWAY!

WE'RE NOT GOING TO HURT YOU!

Zia’s legs shook.

Her hands trembled.

Then she did the only logical thing for someone who'd been through what she had after a three-month coma.

Strong girl, she held up under a full-frontal boo! Still... we'd better pick her up and get out of here.

Desjardins won't stay gone forever.

Let's make haste, then! Ptah says the entryway to the Duat we'll need is in the great pyramid in Cairo.

Please tell me you have a car.

Better.

Not only do we have a car, we have Bedouins!
HALL OF AGES,
HOUSE OF LIFE, EGYPT.
MARCH 19TH, MIDNIGHT.

A VISION... MOST HORRID...

FEAR NOT, MY LORD! ONCE THE RAKES ARE DEALT WITH, ALL WILL BE WELL.

WILL IT?

DON'T YOU EVER HAVE DOUBTS, VLADIMIR?

NO, MY LORD! I HAVE GIVEN MY LIFE TO FIGHTING THE GODS, I WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

LET ME SHOW YOU WE ARE NOT WEAK. BEHOLD! YOUR ATTACK FORCE IS ASSEMBLED!

DEMONS?

SINCE WHEN DO WE USE CREATURES OF CHAOS?

THEY ARE WELL CONTROLLED, MY LORD.

THESE MAGES KNOW THE PROPER BINDING SPELLS, I HANDPICKED THEM FROM NOMES AROUND THE WORLD. THEY HAVE GREAT SKILL.

THEY ARE MURDERERS AND THIEVES, THE WORST OF OUR HOUSE.
Kwai, isn’t it?

As I recall, you were exiled to the three-hundredth nome in North Korea for murdering a fellow magician.

And you, Sarah Jacobi!

You were sent to Antarctica for causing the tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

Many of these magicians have had issues in the past, but if you want Brooklyn House destroyed, we must be ruthless.

And you, Vladimir? Will you lead them?

No, my lord. I have full confidence that this, ah, fine group can deal with Brooklyn on their own. They will attack at sunset tomorrow.

As for me, I will enter the Duat and deal with the Kanes personally. If they have all three scrolls, that’s where they’ll be, trying to wake Ra before the dawn of the equinox.

Go, get those creatures out of my sight.

We will save the House of life. The Kanes will be destroyed, the gods put back into exile, I swear it.

You, my lord, should stay here and rest.

I will send a scrying bowl to your quarters so you may observe our progress.

I will “observe” Vladimir.

But I will not rest.
CAIRO, EGYPT.
MARCH 19TH, FIVE P.M.

Zia took some convincing, but after explaining all that Menshikov had been up to, and what she'd witnessed at al-Hamrah Makan, we persuaded her not to blast us with any more flames.

Bes told us the portal to the Duat could only be opened at sunset, so we killed time in our hotel room playing an ancient game called Senet.

THAT'S A THREE!
HA!
BEAT THAT, GIRLS!
In Senet, you move your pieces round the board in an “S.” First team to get all their pieces to the end wins.

Instead of dice, you throw four strips of ivory like Popsicle sticks, blank on one side and marked with hieroglyphs on the other.

Zia tossed the four sticks.

All of them came up marked.

Sadie moved one of her and Zia’s pieces four ahead, bumping Walt’s piece back.

Walt threw the sticks and three came up blank.

Sadie rolled a three--

Just what she and Zia needed to win.

She moved her last piece home.

High-five, Zia!

Hey, if your game is done, it looks like it’s time to go.
It’s getting to be sunset. That’s what we’re killing time for, right?

Yep, we’re close enough to the equinox now that all the portals in the world are shut down except for two times: sunset and sunrise, when night and day are perfectly balanced.

If you’re going to stop Apep’s rise, we have to get you to the Duat.

Once there, you’ll read the Book of Ra at various stages in the twelve houses of night to try to unlock Ra’s soul.

Wait. If the magicians are going to attack Brooklyn House, won’t they have to go at sunset, too?

Get your priorities straight, kid.

You want to defend your friends, or save the world from the serpent?

I’ll go to Brooklyn.

I have some influence with other magicians—至少 I did, before Red Sands.

What if you have to fight?

Let’s hope for their sake it doesn’t come to that.

I’ll go with you, Zia.

It’s settled.

We’ll get to the pyramid at sunset, where I’ll open two portals—one for Walt and Zia to Brooklyn, the other for you and Sadie to the Duat.

It’ll be dangerous, reckless, probably fatal.

So, an average day for us.
It's no wonder climbing on the Great Pyramid isn't allowed. It's over four hundred and fifty feet high. Some of the "steps" were five feet tall, and we had to hoist one another up.

CARTER, CAN WE TALK?

I NEED TIME. THIS IS VERY STRANGE FOR ME. MAYBE WE CAN BE CLOSER SOMEDAY, BUT FOR NOW—

YOU NEED TIME, ASSUMING WE DON'T ALL DIE TONIGHT.

WALT, KEEP AN EYE OUT. BEY, HELP ME WITH THE PORTAL, WILL YOU?

CARTER, DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. I APPRECIATE YOUR WAKING ME.

I KNOW YOUR HEART WAS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

BUT...?

I'LL DO MY BEST TO PROTECT YOUR HOME.

Promise me, if it comes to a choice, that you'll listen to your own heart, not the will of the gods.

I wanted to say more, to tell her how I felt, but all I could get out was "Um...yeah."
Sadie’s right.

You are... how did she put it? Endearingly clumsy.

This one’s for us. Coming?

Carter!

Adios, kids. I’ll follow you into the Duat, as soon as I get Walt and Zia through their portal. I’ll meet you on the river of night, in the fourth house. You’ll see, now, go!
The portal let us off on a boat. I recognized from my ba trip to the Age of the Gods as Ra's. It was far more run-down than last time.

Looks like we're here!

Also, the Duat gave us an Egyptian makeover.

Nice skirt and eyeliner, Carter!

Huh? Ra's crook and flail—they're glowing!

A crew of fireballs shot from Ra's crook and flail.

The crew scattered to take up their stations.

The leaky hull groaned as the barque turned its nose downstream.

Um... onward!
Any idea where we’re going?

I figure the boat’s going on memory down the path it used to with Ra.

I remember from my studies with Dad there are twelve houses of night.

What about the Book of Ra?

Any clues there?


It’s all pretty confusing.

Bes was going to meet us at the Fourth House—how will we know when we’re there?

The Fourth House?
YOU ARE AT ITS GATES.
AND YOU WON'T MAKE IT PAST.

IF YOU KNEW MY NAME, WE WOULDN'T NEED INTRODUCTIONS, AND I COULD LET YOU PASS.
UNFORTUNATELY, NO ONE EVER KNOWS MY NAME.

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY I HAVE TO SLICE YOU TO PIECES.

His name?! That's Khnum!

Carter, I don't think that name will work. He wants us to tell his secret name.

I opened the Book of Ra and began to read the first part of the spell.

"I name you first from Chaos, Khnum, who is Ra, the evening sun. I summon your BA to awaken the great one..."

"...For I am Sadie Kane, restorer of the throne of fire!"
"NAME YOU 'BREATH INTO CLAY! THE RAM OF NIGHT'S FLOCK, THE DIVINE POTTER!"

"NAME YOU KHNM, PROTECTOR OF THE FOURTH GATE. I RETURN YOUR NAME. I RETURN YOUR ESSENCE TO RA."

"YES. WELL DONE, MY LADY. YOU MAY PASS INTO THE FOURTH HOUSE.

BUT BEWARE THE FIRES, AND BE PREPARED FOR THE SECOND FORM OF RA.

HE WILL NOT BE SO GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HELP.

On the other side of the gates, the whole boat was awash in ruby light.

Roughly a hundred meters ahead of us, the tunnel opened into a huge cavern.

I recognized the massive boiling lake—but the last time I hadn't seen it from this angle.

OH, NO. NOT THIS PLACE AGAIN.
THE LAKE OF FIRE!

WE'VE GOT TO TURN AROUND! EVEN IF THAT WASN'T FIRE, WE'LL NEVER SURVIVE THE DROP!

WE HAVE TO TAKE THE SHIP THROUGH THE FIRE. THAT WAS PART OF THE SUN'S NIGHTLY REBIRTH, RIGHT? RA WOULD HAVE DONE IT.

IF Ra went and jumped off a cliff, would you do it?

AAAAAAAAAH!!
As far as I could tell, we were both fine.

The crook and flail in Carter’s hands created a shield from the flames!

Touching the lake of fire made a change to Ra’s barque.

As the boat docked itself, we saw a familiar figure.

BES!

I TOLD YOU I’D MEET YOU AT THE FOURTH HOUSE.

STALKER?

LET’S GET A MOVE ON BEFORE YOUR STALKER ARRIVES.

YEAH, STALKER! PERHAPS YOU DIDN’T NOTICE MENSHEKOV’S BEEN FOLLOWING YOU.

TAKE A LOOK!
Sunny Acres Assisted-Living Community.

Used to be called the "House of Rest," until it fell under new management.

It's where all the forgotten gods of Egypt end up when they lose power or become senile... and the best place to search for Ra.

Let's ask for Ra at the nurses' station.

Now, come on. We have to find the Sun God before he catches up.

What is this place, Bes?

Hospitals, Classrooms. Now I'll add to my list of least-favorite places: old people's homes.

That may sound odd, as I lived with my grandparents. I suppose their flat counts as an old people's home. But I mean institutions. Nursing homes.

Those are the worst.

In other words, the scene was thoroughly depressing.
The nurses’ desk was a crescent of granite in front of a stone disk with a triangular fin—a sundial, which seemed strange, as there was no sun.

Behind the counter, a heavy woman stood with her back to us, checking a whiteboard with names and medication times.

**Excuse us!**

May I help you?

Um, hippo—I mean, hi-lo!

My brother and I are looking for...

Carter! Eyes toward her eyes.

What? Right. Sorry. Uh, you’re a goddess, Tawaret, right?

Why, how nice to be recognized! Yes, dear. I’m Tawaret.

You said you were looking for a relative, perhaps?

They want to wake Ra.

When Bes spoke, a twinkle of recognition flashed across Tawaret’s eyes.

I glanced at Carter and found he was not staring at the nurse’s face.
HE'S DOING US A FAVOR.
OUR FRIEND BAST
ASKED HIM TO LOOK AFTER US.
I SEE. A FAVOR
FOR BAST.
PLEASE, LOOK, THE FATE
OF THE WORLD IS AT STAKE!
IT'S VERY IMPORTANT WE
FIND RA, WE WANT TO
AWAKEN HIM.

IF THAT'S THE CASE,
CHILDREN, YOU'RE
RUNNING OUT OF
TIME.

Tawaret pointed to the sundial. The needle
was inching toward the number five.

THIS PLACE
IS THE FOURTH HOUSE
OF NIGHT! HOW CAN THE
SUNDIAL BE MOVING
TOWARD FIVE?

WE SHOULD BE FROZEN AT THE
FOURTH HOUR!

DOESN'T WORK THAT
WAY, KID. TIME IN
THE MORTAL WORLD
DOESN'T STOP
PASSING JUST
BECAUSE YOU'RE
IN THE FOURTH
HOUSE.
The gates to the
houses are connected
to their times of
night. Which
means--

--WE CAN STAY IN THE FOURTH HOUSE
FOR AS LONG AS WE LIKE, BUT ONCE
THAT DIAL HITS FIVE, WE'LL BE STUCK
IN THE FOURTH HOUSE UNTIL IT
ROLLS TO THE FOUR THE
NEXT DAY!

THEN WE'D
BEST HURRY TO
THE DORMITORIES TO FIND RA!

I'LL SHOW
YOU THE WAY. FOLLOW ME!
We wandered the hall of an infinite magic nursing home, led by a hippo nurse with a torch. Really, just an ordinary night for the Kanes.

**IS THERE SOME KIND OF HISTORY BETWEEN YOU AND TAWARET?**
**THE WAY YOU TWO BEHAVE...**

Yeah, we used to date. But, Bast kind of got in the way.

_Bast?_  

Yeah, Bast, she was the most popular godess with the common folk. I was the most popular god.

So, you know, we'd see each other at festivals and such. She was... well, beautiful.

I was so obsessed, I wasn't very good to Tawaret over the years.

I still do whatever Bast asks of me, like watching you two.

She treated me like a little brother, still does.

_I'm a terrible dwarf, okay?_  

I can see past appearances now, but I've hurt Tawaret too much. I wish I could turn back the clock, but that's just it, isn't it?

We're all out of time.
We passed so many bedrooms I lost count. Most of the doors were closed, but a few were open, showing frail old gods in their beds, staring at the flickering blue light of televisions or simply lying in the dark crying. After twenty or thirty such rooms, I stopped looking. It was too depressing.

I held the Book of Ra, hoping it would get warmer as we approached the sun god, but no such luck. I began to feel frantic.

DO YOU THINK THE SCROLL COULD GUIDE US?

IT'S NOT HEATING UP OR LIGHTING UP IN ANY WAY.

MAYBE IF I START TO READ THE SECOND PART OF THE SPELL--

THIS ISN'T WORKING.

SADIE, BE CAREFUL! IF IT'S THE WRONG TIME, IT COULD BACKFIRE!

YOU COULD HAVE YOUR EYES RUINED LIKE MENSHEKOV OR WORSE!

I KNOW. BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO WANDER THE HALLS FOREVER, AND RA WILL ONLY APPEAR IF WE INVOCED HIM. WE HAVE TO PROVE OURSELVES BY TAKING THE RISK.

WELL, YOU GET THE IDEA. I DESCRIBED HOW RA ROSE FROM THE SEA OF CHAOS. I RECALLED HIS LIGHT SHINING ON THE PRIMORDIAL LAND OF EGYPT, BRINGING LIFE TO THE NILE VALLEY.

"I INVOC THE NAME OF RA, THE SLEEPING KING, LORD OF THE NOONDAY SUN, WHO SITS UPON THE THRONE OF FIRE..."

As I read, I felt warmer.

SADIE, YOU'RE SMOKING.
I stayed focused on the scroll. I described Ra’s sun boat sailing across the sky.

I spoke of his kingly wisdom and the battles he’d won against Apophis.

"RA, THE SUN’S ZENITH..."

The spell led me to a door.

Carter pushed it open and we stepped inside. I kept reading, though I was quickly approaching the end of the spell.

"THE LIGHT OF RA RETURNS."

In the sputtering light of my spell, I saw the oldest man in the world sleeping in bed.
I moved to his bedside and kept reading. I described Ra awakening at dawn, sitting in his throne as his boat climbed the sky, the plants turning toward the warmth of the sun.

The old man didn’t move. His mouth was pursed like his lips had been sewn together.

"I SING THE PRAISES OF THE SUN GOD."

I stretched out my free hand to Carter and snapped my fingers.

Carter rummaged through my bag and passed me the obsidian netjeri blade from Anubis. If ever there was a moment for Opening the Mouth, this was it.

I touched the knife to the old man’s lips and spoke the last line of the spell.

"AWAKE, MY KING, WITH THE NEW DAY."
He still looks old... isn't he supposed to look young?

Uh?

He isn't whole yet. You'll need to complete the night's journey and the third part of the spell.

Khepri, the Scarab. Maybe if we find the last part of his soul, he'll be reborn properly.

Maybe he needs these.

Um, Mr. Ra? Here's your crook and flail back.

I like zebras!

Weasels are sick.

This is a disaster.

Let's get him to the boat. Bes, can you--

Yep. Excuse me, Lord Ra, I'll have to carry you.
We raced past other decrepit gods, who all got quite excited.

\textit{Wheee! Wheee! Wheee!}

\textit{Here comes the Sun!}

We burst into the lobby.

On the sundial, the needle's shadow was pointing to eight.

We were stuck in the \textbf{Fourth House} until the next day. Only there would never be another day, because Apophis was due to eat the sun as it rose.

\textbf{We spent three hours looking for this shit?!}

Unless we could somehow turn back time, the world was doomed.

No wonder Menshikov had passed through the Fourth House without bothering to fight us.

We'd already lost.
We boarded the sun boat. What was the point of continuing?

Weasel: Cookies! Zebra!
As soon as Ra stepped on the boat, brilliant light exploded around him, completely blinding me.

Ra stood with transformed clothes and before him, a chair of molten gold.

Fun fact about the Kane family: our parent's run the Duat. Been that way ever since our father decided to host Osiris, the lord of the underworld.

You... you should go. Perhaps Osiris can provide an answer.

What do you think, Sadie?

Shall we visit mom and dad?

Might as well...

We set sail for our father's island home on the Lake of Fire.
Our boat turned toward a dock, where a man and a woman stood waiting for us. Dad wore his usual brown suit. His skin glowed with a bluish tint. Mom shimmered in ghostly white.

Sadie, Carter, it's great to see you!

We've been watching your progress. You've both been so brave.

Not that it matters much. The bloody sundial—the stupid gates—we failed!

I'm so proud of you both. Come, we've prepared a feast.

Shhh, none of that. This is a time to rest and renew.

The last time we'd visited our father, the place was dark and scary, fitting for a person who rules the Hall of Judgment.

But now it had a new life!

Your mother and I have been splitting our time between here, for my Osiris duties, and Aaru, the Egyptian heaven.
We ate. It tasted like perfection. But it was hard to enjoy.

We haven't finished the book of Ra. We need to find Khepri.

Yes, the scarab god, Ra's form as the rising sun.

To find him, you would need to pass through the gates.

Dad, you don't have a way through the gates, do you?

Can you teleport us to the other side or something?

I wish I could, but the journey must be followed. It is part of Ra's rebirth.

You're right. You need extra time.

There might be a way, though I'd never suggest it if the stakes weren't so high—

Hmph?

You invited him?

Who? What do you mean?

Me, I suppose.

Moon pie.
Khonsu, the Moon God, at your service. I'm sure you've heard stories about me.

I remember! You gambled with Nut, and she won enough moonlight to add five extra days to the calendar.

That let her get around Ra's commandment that her five children couldn't be born on any day of the year.

Bad nuts.

Yes, Nut was a gambler! And I have the power to change time.

The moon is changeable, you see. Its light waxes and wanes. In my hands, time can also wax and wane. You need... what, about three extra hours?

I can weave that for you out of moonlight, if you and your sister are willing to gamble for it.

I can make it so that the gates beyond the Fourth House have not yet closed.

So what do you say, Carter?

Sadie?

Play me at Senet.
IT'S ONLY A PART OF YOUR SOUL. ROUGHLY ONE-FIFTH. NOT ENOUGH TO KILL YOU. JUST TURN YOU INTO A VEGETABLE, LIKE RA THERE.

NOW, WHO'S FEELING LUCKY?

CARTER AND SADIE, I BROUGHT KHONSU HERE SO THAT YOU'D HAVE THE CHOICE. WE DON'T EXPECT YOU TO TAKE THIS RISK.

BUT WHATEVER YOU DO, I'M STILL PROUD OF YOU BOTH.

IF THE WORLD ENDS TONIGHT, THAT WON'T CHANGE.

I UNDERSTAND, DAD. WE'RE KANES. WE DON'T RUN FROM HARD CHOICES.

CARTER'S RIGHT. KHONSU, WE'LL PLAY YOUR STUPID GAME.

EXCELLENT! THAT'S TWO SOULS. TWO HOURS TO WIN. AH, BUT YOU'LL NEED THREE HOURS TO GET THROUGH THE GATES ON TIME, WON'T YOU?

I'LL DO IT.

BES, YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH FOR US. BAST WOULD NEVER EXPECT YOU--

I'M NOT DOING IT FOR BAST!

YOU KIDS ARE THE REAL DEAL.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AGES I'VE FELT WANTED AGAIN.

IMPORTANT. NOT LIKE A SIDESHOW ATTRACTION. IF THINGS GO WRONG, JUST TELL TAWARET... TELL HER I TRIED TO TURN BACK THE CLOCK.

WE CANNOT STAY FOR THIS. BUT, CHILDREN... WE LOVE YOU. YOU WILL PREVAIL.
We played the game.

Khonsu wasn’t too sympathetic to our mission to stop Apophis.

IF APOPHIS TAKES OVER AND SWALLOWS THE SUN, WELL, I SUPPOSE THE MOON WILL STILL BE THERE.

Khonsu tossed the sticks.

He rolled a five and got one of his pieces almost to the end of the board.

The bad news: he made alarming progress.

The good news: the piece got stuck at the House of Three Truths.

He could only roll a three to get it out.

CAREFUL NOW. THIS IS WHERE IT GETS INTERESTING.

Sadie rolled.

A four that gives us two options, our lead piece could go out.

Or our second piece could bump Khonsu’s piece from the House of Three Truths and send it back to the start.

BUMP HIM. IT’S SAFER.

THEN WE’RE STUCK IN THE HOUSE OF THREE TRUTHS.

THE CHANCES OF KHONSU ROLLING A THREE ARE SLIM.

I moved our first piece four places out of play.

CONGRATULATIONS! I OWE YOU ONE HOUR.

NOW IT’S MY TURN.

Khonsu’s sticks clattered on the game board, and I felt like someone had snipped an elevator cable in my chest, plunging my heart straight down a shaft.

TAKE YOUR FIRST PIECE OUT.

THAT WAY YOU’LL BE ASSURED OF AT LEAST ONE EXTRA HOUR.
Khonsu had rolled a three.

Oh, what a shame. Now, whose soul do I collect first?

No, please! Trade back. Take the hour you owe us instead.

Those aren't the rules.

Take my ren, the move was my idea.

Bes, no!

It was part of the strategy, kids.

The most important thing is getting all three of your pieces off the board, and losing no more than one.

This was the only way to do it.

You'll beat him easily now, sometimes you have to lose a piece to win a game.

Bes, don't! This isn't right.

Kid, you were willing to sacrifice. Are you saying I'm not as brave as some Pipsqueak Magician?

Now, win the game and get out of here.

And when you see Menshikov...

Kick him in the knee for me.

What a delight! A god's ren. Are you ready, Bes?

I'm ready.
Bee’s form dissolves into a montage of lightning-fast images: a collection of his memories, his essence, from ancient to modern days.

MMM... DELECTABLE!
YOUR MOVE.

Maybe it was rage, or Bee’s strategy, or maybe we just got lucky, but the rest of the game Sadie and I destroyed Khonsu easily.

We bumped his pieces at every opportunity.

Within five minutes, our last piece was off the board.

Well done! Three hours are yours.

Khonsu wound back the hours on his watch.

I hate you. You’re cold, calculating, horrible—and I’m just what you needed.

If you hurry, there’s now time to make it to the Twelfth House.
On the way through the houses, lost souls ran to the riverbank to watch us pass. It had been millennia since Ra sailed the Duat, and they smiled as they basked in the sun god’s warm light.

Next we passed through Aaru, the Egyptian version of paradise.

The Eighth House, the House of Challenges, wasn’t very challenging. We fought monsters, yes, Serpents loomed out of the river. Demons arose. Ships full of ghosts tried to board the sun boat. We destroyed them all.

The Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh houses passed in a blur. At last I heard a roar up ahead, like another waterfall or a stretch of rapids. We kept gaining speed.
We passed under a low archway carved like the goddess Nut. I got the feeling we were entering the Twelfth House, the last part of the Duat before we emerged into a new dawn.

**THE PATH'S BEEN SABOTAGED.**

It's a trap. The work of Apophis!

I know. Let's go tell him we don't like his work.

The boat crashed into a cavern seething with Chaos energy.

Welcome to the serpent's prison!

Glad you could join us for the end of the world.
HELLO-O-O!

AND I SEE YOU'VE BROUGHT A SENILE SUN GOD!

THE SCARABS THAT COMPOSE THIS BEACH WERE ALL MULTIPLYED FROM ONE, KHEPRI, THE THIRD SOUL OF RA. MY DEMONS WILL DIG HIM UP SOON ENOUGH!

FOOD FOR THE SERPENT.

OVER MY DEAD BODY.

A REMATCH, CARTER KANE? BY ALL MEANS.

LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO ON YOUR OWN...

I NOTICE YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR DWARF BABYSITTER THIS TIME.

My vision turned red. And it had nothing to do with the light of the cavern.
I’d never summoned the hawk god’s avatar so deep in the Duat before.

The results, were...

FREAK-ish!

WHACK!

THUNK!
You're insane, you'll be destroyed too.

We're already dead, Carter Kane!

This cavern was never meant for humans. Can't you feel the power of chaos seeping into our bodies, withering our souls?

But I have bigger plans. A host can live indefinitely. I will live forever!

There are worse things than death, Vladimir.

A new boat glided toward the shore. Its lone passenger was Michel Desjardins.

Glowing hieroglyphs floated from his robes, making a trail of divine words behind him.
MADAME KANE, BEGIN YOUR SPELL. I WILL DEAL WITH THIS WRETCH.

HAVE YOU LOOKED AT YOURSELF LATELY, MY LORD? MY CURSES HAVE BEEN SAPPING YOUR STRENGTH FOR MONTHS, AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE IT. YOU'RE NEARLY DEAD NOW. I AM THE MOST POWERFUL MAGICIAN IN THE WORLD.

DEMONS, ATTACK!!!

I threw down my staff and summoned a huge kite—the bird of prey kind, not the toy.

Menshikov’s Forces rushed forward.
Carter and Misha had the demons covered.

And Mensikov was busy with the Chief Lector.

Time to read the last chapter in the Book of Ra.

"I invoke the dawn of a new day."

"Khepri, the scarab who rises from death, the rebirth of Ra!"

The Book of Ra disappeared with a poof and the ground quaked.

I almost dared to hope we’d won.
WITH KHEPRI DISLODGED, THERE IS NOTHING TO HOLD THE REST OF THE SCARABS, OR APOPHIS, IN PLACE!

WELL DONE, SADIE KANE!

Chaos energy swept the scarabs off the beach, revealing red sand below.
All the magical energy in the cavern raced toward Menshikov's body—golden mist, red light, glowing hieroglyphs—collapsing into him as if he'd taken on the gravity of a black hole.

I willed my giant kite to dive toward Menshikov. Its talons poised to strike.

IF YOU REFUSE, I WILL UNKNOT YOUR BONES, DISSOLVE YOUR SOUL, AND SEND YOU BACK TO THE PRIMORDIAL OOZE YOU CAME FROM.

GIVE ME THE SCARAB, SADIE.

TEMTING, WHAT DO YOU THINK, CARTER?

EHP.
I snuck up on Vlad (which is not easy when you’re seventeen feet tall) and snacked him upside the head with a shovel.

Then I stomped him deep into a sandpile.

I would’ve spit on it, too, but I wasn’t sure I could do that with a falcon beak.

Carter buried Vlad as best as he could, then turned him over to me.

The sand melted, hardening into a coffin-size block of solid glass.

That wasn’t... so hard.

Hurry, get--huff--the scarab to Ra.

Don’t want a bug.

It’s your soul! You’ll take it, and you’ll like it!
Ra took the beetle...

And to my horror, he popped it in his mouth.

_BRAAAP!

Was he supposed to swallow it?

Just then, Menshikov’s glass grave blew up.

A high-powered wave of sand and glass shards knocked me off my feet and shredded my avatar.

Menshikov had changed.

Apophis was in full control of the host body now.

_SSSILLY CHILDREN.

YOUR EFFORTS ARE FOR NAUGHT!
Still reeling from the explosion, we watched helplessly as Apophis sauntered toward Ra.

NOW, TO DEAL WITH THE OLD MAN.

HELLO, RA. IT’S BEEN A LONG TIME. WE USED TO PLAY SO NICELY TOGETHER. EVERY NIGHT, TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER. DON’T YOU REMEMBER?

CAN’T PLAY. GO AWAY.

!?
The Lord of Chaos' attacks turned into hieroglyphs against the Chief Lector's shield, chaos forced into patterns of words—into the divine language of creation.

Then, a ceramic statuette of a red snake materialized in Desjardins's palm.

A SHABTI OF APOPHIS? THE PENALTY FOR MAKING THOSE IS DEATH! I could understand why. Images hold power. A statue of Apophis was way too dangerous to play with.

But it was also a necessary ingredient for certain spells...

AN EXORCISM. HE'S TRYING TO ERASE APOPHIS.
ARE YOU INSANE, MICHEL? YOU CAN’T EXECRATE ME!

I NAME YOU LORD OF CHAOS, SERPENT IN THE DARK, FEAR OF THE TWELVE HOUSES, THE HATED ONE—

I SPEAK FOR THE GODS. I SPEAK FOR THE HOUSE OF LIFE. I AM A SERVANT OF MA’AT.

I CAST YOU UNDERFOOT.

The thing that had been Menshkov sizzled in the sand.

Then...

It began to grow.
STOP your haste! I CANNOT BE CONTAINED!

I erase your name.

I remove you from the memory of Egypt!
A portal opened, anchored on Apophis himself.

We watched as Apophis and the entire beach sank into the dark waters.

Though victorious, we felt far from triumphant.

Execution won’t last… only bought you some time.
The Chief Lector passed. His body disintegrated into hieroglyphs—too many to read, the story of his entire life.

Bring Amos my cape.

Tell him what happened.

Tell them all...

Bye-bye. Weasels are sick.

All that, and what happened? We retrieved a senile god, we lost BFS and the Chief Lector, and we’re dying of chaos sickness.

We’re not going to make it, are we?

We have to hold on, at least until dawn.
Ahead of us, two doors materialized at the tunnel’s end.

Each new dawn is a new world. Maybe we’ll be healed.

Ra, too?

Gates holding two giant golden scarab statues opened, and beyond them glimmered the morning skyline of Manhattan. The River of Night was emptying out into New York Harbor.

With daylight, I was starting to feel better, stronger, like I’d had a good night’s sleep.

Our Chaos sickness disappeared as soon as we saw daylight.
Smoke rose from Brooklyn—with flashes of multicolored light and streaks of fire as winged creatures engaged in aerial combat.

BROOKLYN HOUSE NEEDS OUR HELP!

We turned the sun boat toward home—and sailed straight into battle.
Carter popped into avatar form—the glowing golden kind, thank goodness. The meter-tall birdman had been a bit too scary for me.

HELLO-O-O-O! ZEBRAS!

RA!

RA?

RA!

RA!
 HA-D!!

Roof: Cleared!

FRAAA!

Hey, buddy!
WALT, ZIA! WHAT'S UP, GUYS?

THE ENEMY'S BEEN TRYING TO BREAK IN ALL NIGHT! AMOS AND BAST HAVE HELD THEM OFF, BUT-

ZEBRA!

IS THAT-- THAT ISN'T--

THIS IS-- THIS IS RA, THE LORD OF THE SUN? WHY IS HE OFFERING ME A BUG?

Before I could think about this further, Carter pulled me away!

I LIKE ZEBRAS, WEASELS IS SICK?

ZEBRAS... ZIA, WEASELS... WALT.

COME ON, SADIE, WE HAVE TO SECURE THE VERANDA!
SADIE! CARTER!
YOU FOUND RA?

Yeah, he's upstairs! Go check on him if you like.

Holy Horus...

They've breached the east wall. Get inside!

In fact, Horus was about the only thing not doing battle in the Great Room.
It was a complete rout. The enemy magicians had been expecting to fight a band of untrained children. No doubt that receiving the full Kane treatment sent them into a panic. 

One of the women managed to open an escape portal in the far wall.

We couldn’t let them go that easily.

I needed a big spell. Carter had harnessed the power of Horus.

With a little concentration, I would have the power of Isis!
WE'RE NOT YOUR ENEMIES!

I DON'T CARE IF YOU LIKE US, BUT THE WORLD HAS CHANGED.

YOU NEED TO HEAR WHAT'S HAPPENED, CARTER, TAKE IT AWAY.

I RAISED RA. DESJARDINS Fought AT OUR Side.

HE Defeated MEnSHIKOV And Execrated ApOPhS. He SACRIFICed His life To Buy Us A little TIME.

But Apophis will Be Back.

THEy're kAnEs! TraItors! They PRObably KilleD DesjardIns AND MEnshikov Themselves.

RA IS ReBorn? WE Require PrOF! WE Require PrOF!

With His Last Words, DesjardIns Told me To EXPLAIN The TRUTH. He WANTED you To KNOW—THE PATH Of GODs Has To Be RESTORED.

HELLO—00-00-0.
Several enemy magicians threw down their staffs and wands.

The other nomes will never recognize your claim, Kane, you are tainted with the power of Set!

We'll spread the word. We'll let them know you murdered Desjardins. They'll never follow you!
For the second time in three months, we'd almost destroyed Brooklyn House. That had to be a record.

Reverently, Amos took the leopard-skin cape from Carter's hands.

"Poor Michel."

With the Chief Lector dead, the responsibility passes to the most powerful magician left in the world.

"Me, I am the new Chief Lector."

"Of course, that'll mean I must return to the House of Life in Cairo."

I'll watch over the Hall of Ages.

"You've both made me proud. You've given me hope for the first time in years."

"Besides, you have things well in hand here at Brooklyn House. You don't need a mentor anymore."
Amos made a portal.

I'll accompany Amos--I mean the Chief Lector--to the First Nome. I'll make sure he is recognized as the leader of the house.

It is my duty as a servant of Ma'at.

Carter, thank you for waking me. I know I just met you.

And this is crazy, but when you're settled in the first Nome...

Scry me, maybe?

We'll be in touch.

We all knew things wouldn't settle anytime soon. There was no guarantee we'd ever live long enough to see Zia again.

You were all brilliant! You destroyed the enemy in seconds!

But we could barely keep them out! By dawn, I was, like, completely out of energy.

If you can fight so well, how were they able to keep you pinned all night?

And I was in a coma.
Right at dawn, I woke up feeling great. I guess as soon as you arrived. I don’t know. something happened.

The power of Ra, when he rose. He brought new life, new energy to all of us.

He revitalized our spirit. Without that, we would’ve failed.

Great to hear, now, let’s clean up!

Our initiates knew the hi-nehm* spell well enough to fix most of the broken things.

*“bring together”

And it’s truly amazing how much polishing, dusting, and scrubbing one can accomplish by attacking large dusting cloths to the wings of a griffin.

By sunset, we had the mansion completely restored.

Welcome, Carter and Sadie. We are honored.

Horus’s words didn’t match his tone, which was stiff and formal.

I think this one’s for us, Sadie.
On the other side, we found ourselves in the throne room of the gods, facing a crowd of assembled deities.

BEHOLD! CARTER AND SADIE KANE, WHO AWAKENED OUR KING!

LET THERE BE NO DOUBT: APOPHIS THE ENEMY HAS RISEN. WE MUST UNITE BEHIND RA.

WE WILL FIND A WAY TO DEFEAT APOPHIS! NOW, CELEBRATE THE RETURN OF RA! I EMBRACE CARTER KANE AS A BROTHER.

I PLEDGE MY LOYALTY! I EXPECT YOU ALL TO DO THE SAME. I WILL PROTECT RA’S BOAT AS WE PASS THROUGH THE DUAT TONIGHT.

EACH OF YOU SHALL TAKE TURNS WITH THIS DUTY UNTIL THE SUN GOD IS... FULLY RECOVERED.

He sounded absolutely unconvinced this would ever happen.

I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU’RE DOING, SADIE. OUR GREATEST ENEMY RISES, AND YOU HAVE DETHRONED MY SON AND MADE A SENILE GOD OUR LEADER.

GIVE IT A CHANCE, ISIS.
The other gods bowed respectfully to us, but I could feel their hostility simmering just below the surface.

I am your ally, Carter. I will lend you my strength whenever you ask. You will revive the path of my magic in the House of Life, and we will fight together to destroy the serpent.

But make no mistake: you have cost me a throne.

If your choice costs us the war, I swear my last act before Apophis swallows me will be to crush you like a gnat. And if it comes to pass that we win this war without Ra’s help, if you have disgraced me for nothing...

...I swear that the death of Cleopatra and the curse of Akenaten will look like nothing compared to the wrath I will visit on you and your family for all time.

Do you understand?

Just do your part, Horus.
HA! ANUBIS, SEE THESE TWO OUT.

GO NOW, CARTER, SEE WHAT YOUR VICTORY HAS COST.

LET US HOPE ALL YOUR ALLIES DO NOT SHARE SUCH A FATE.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

HE WANTED YOU TO SEE BES.

BES IS ALIVE?

BES IS IN TAWARET’S CARE. WITHOUT HIS REN, HE WILL REMAIN A HUSK.

I'M SORRY, SADIE. THE GODS CAN BE--

UNGRATEFUL? INFURIATING?

I couldn’t help sobbing.

I remembered how we'd met at Waterloo Station, when he'd chauffeured Liz and Emma and me to safety. I remembered how he'd scoured away Nechbet and Babi in his ridiculous Speedo.

He had an enormous, colorful, ludicrous, wonderful personality—and it seemed impossible that it was gone forever. He'd given his immortal life to buy us one extra hour.

WE CAN BE SLOW TO REALIZE WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

SOMETIMES, IT TAKES US A WHILE TO APPRECIATE SOMETHING NEW...

...SOMETHING THAT MIGHT CHANGE US FOR THE BETTER.

He fixed me with those warm eyes, and I wanted to melt into a puddle.
That evening I sat alone on my bed with the windows open. The first night of spring had turned surprisingly warm and pleasant. Lights glittered along the riverfront.

There was a knock at the door.

Had to be Carter coming to debrief.

Hi, Sadie.

He blinked, obviously surprised by my lack of hospitality.

Sorry, I'll go.

No! I mean… that's all right, you just surprised me. And—you know… we have rules about boys being in the girls' rooms without, um, supervision.

Well, you're the instructor. Can you supervise me?

He leaned against the closet door. With some horror, I realized it was still open, revealing my picture of Amubs.

Oh, you want me to close this?

Yes, no, possibly. I mean, it doesn't matter. Well, not that it doesn't matter, but—

Sadie, I'm just here to say...
That day in the desert, at Baharya... would you think I’m crazy if I tell you that was the best day of my life?

Well, Egyptian desert, smelly camels, possessed date farmers... gosh, it was quite a day.

AND YOU.

Yes, well, I suppose I belong in that list of catastrophes.

Sadie, I just wanted to say, whatever happens, I’m glad I met you here in Brooklyn, and whatever happens with my curse... it’s okay.

It’s not okay!

I’d hoped you would also be cured by Ra’s return, as Jaz was.

Ra’s return may not have cured me, but it still gave me new hope. You’re amazing, Sadie. One way or another, we’re going to make this work. I’m not leaving you.

How can you promise that?

Walt touched my Shen amulet. Carter said it symbolized eternity.

I thought he might kiss me, but something made us both hesitate—a sense that it would only make things more uncertain. More fragile.

Just try not to worry about me.

Leave it to me to be completely torn between two amazing guys—one who’s dying and another who’s the god of death. What sort of choice is that, I ask you?

A few moments after Walt left, Carter came in.

Hey, sis!

In all the questing, I forgot to give you a birthday present.
IT'S, UM, NOT A GOLD NECKLACE, OR EVEN A MAGICAL KNIFE.

BUT I TOLD YOU I HAD A BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR YOU. THIS—

IT'S AN AMAZING BIRTHDAY PRESENT, AND YOU'RE AN AMAZING BROTHER! A PIECE OF MOM.

GLAD YOU LIKE IT.

On the inside cover, a name was written in lovely cursive.

I FOUND IT IN THE LIBRARY, AND YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT ELSE I FOUND—A THESIS PAPER BY DAD!

IT BREAKS DOWN THE EGYPTIAN SOUL INTO DIFFERENT PARTS, MORE THAN JUST THE SECRET NAME AND BA. I THINK IF WE FIND THE SHADOW OF APOLLO'S SOUL WE CAN...

CARTER, CAN'T WE REST FOR ONE DAY?

RIGHT, RIGHT. BUT IF YOU WANT TO DEBRIEF, THE INITIATES ARE READY.

The Serpent's Shadow
A Discourse on Sheut in Egyptian Mythology and its Uses
by Julius Kane

Carter!!

So now you know what really happened on the equinox.
Desjardins sacrificed his life to buy us time, but Apophis is quickly working his way out of the abyss. We may have weeks, if we’re lucky, days, if we’re not.

Amos has taken over the reins of Chief Lector, but some nomes are in rebellion. Many believe the Kanes have taken over by force. Amos is trying to assert himself as the leader of the House of Life, but it’s not going to be easy.

Luckily, he has Zia by his side. When she’s not scaring with Carter!

Ra is reborn, and once again sails the Duat night and day fighting off the process of Chaos with help from the other gods.

We’re sending out the word to set the record straight.
We don’t have all the answers yet. We don’t know how to heal Ra, or Bes, or even Walt. We don’t know what role Zia will play, or if the gods can be trusted to help us.

We don’t know when or where Apophis will strike, though it’ll likely be the autumn equinox.

The point is, wherever you are, whatever type of magic you practice, we need your help. Unless we unite and learn the path of the gods quickly, we don’t stand a chance.

The clock is ticking at Brooklyn House.

We’ll keep a room ready for you.
GRAPHIC NOVELS FROM #1 NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR RICK RIORDAN

PERCY JACKSON AND THE OLYMPIANS

THE LIGHTNING THIEF

RICK RIORDAN

THE SEA OF MONSTERS

RICK RIORDAN

THE TITAN'S CURSE

RICK RIORDAN

THE KANE CHRONICLES

THE HEROES OF OLYMPUS

THE RED PYRAMID

RICK RIORDAN

AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS AND eBOOKS ARE SOLD

READRIORDAN.COM

PRAISE FOR
The Throne of Fire

★ “...Riordan kickstarts the action, [and] never lets up on the gas...”
— SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL (starred review)

“Throne of Fire is a breathless, action-packed tale that will leave readers clamoring for the next chapter.”
— VOYA