

AWAKENING Part Two River of Time

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Across all my lives, my first memory of flight has always been with her.

Long before we were Carter Hall and Shiera.

It was Egypt.
My name was *Khufu*.
She was *Chay-ara*.

We were much different people then. Living much different lives.

But still very much in love.



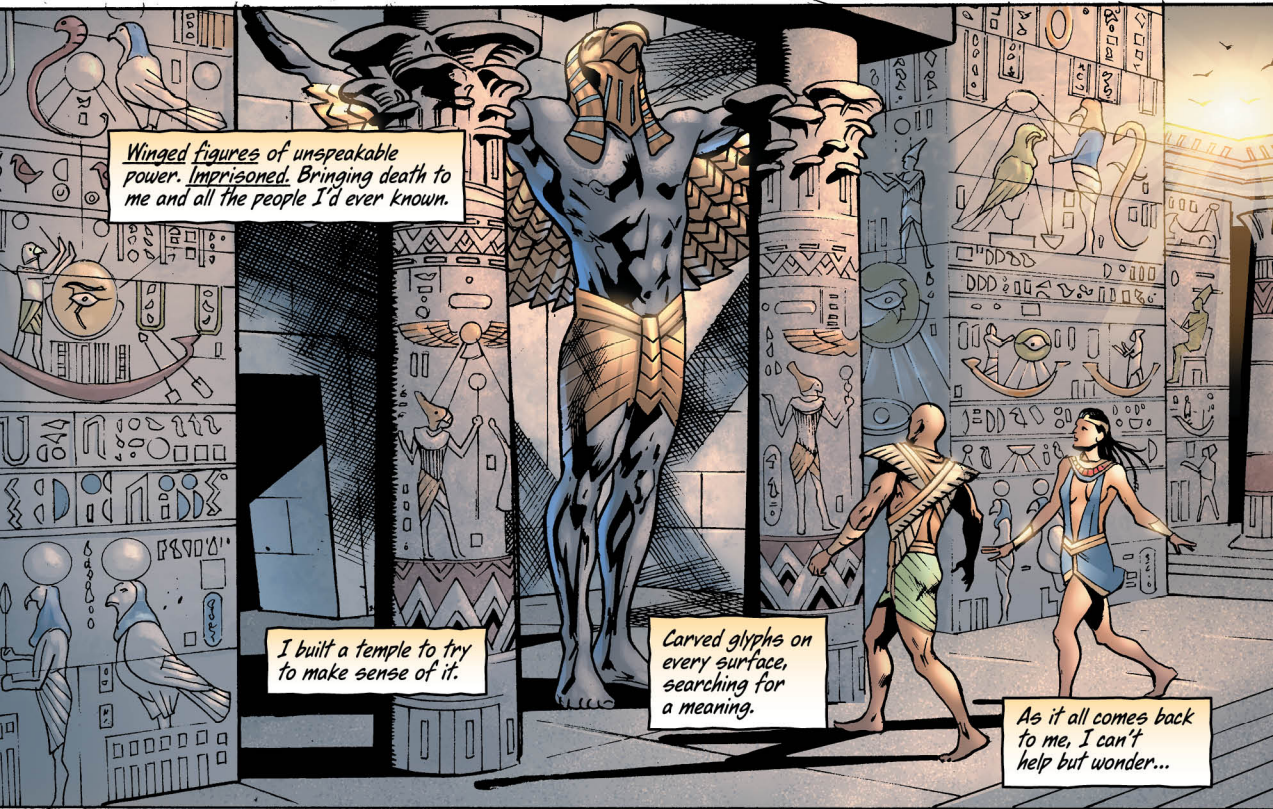
A mysterious ship fell from the sky.

Inside was the unearthly Nth metal that we crafted into our belts and harnesses. The metal gave us the ability to soar.

We thought it was a gift from the gods.

But with the ship's arrival also came...visions.

Not visions. Memories. A history that I was part of, but I'd forgotten my role.



Winged figures of unspeakable power. Imprisoned. Bringing death to me and all the people I'd ever known.

I built a temple to try to make sense of it.

Carved glyphs on every surface, searching for a meaning.

As it all comes back to me, I can't help but wonder...

...The mysterious ship. What if it didn't crash in Egypt by happenstance?

What if it was searching for me?

What if whoever sent it needed my help?

I'm writing this because she, of all people, deserves to know what I've learned.

Khufu wasn't the first time. Egypt wasn't the first place. My lives on Earth are not my entire history.

I've spent lifetimes on many worlds.

Earth. Thanagar. Rann. Krypton.

Still others.

LONDON.

I've been reincarnating across time and space. Maybe as far back as creation.

Maybe...maybe she has been, too.

But the memories are incomplete. The more distant I am from a life, the less I seem able to remember.

The only constant I recall is the winged figure.

When I was Silent Knight, it was painted on my shield.

When I was Nighthawk, it was embroidered on my shirt.

When I was the Birdman, it was tattooed on my skin.

I long believed that it was a symbol--an emblem--representing who I am.

I realize now it's something else--a reminder of the threat that's coming. The mission I'm meant to fulfill.

Not Wingors or Manhawks or Barbatos. This isn't anything I've fought before. It's personal.

It goes back to my beginning.

I'm an archaeologist, so I'm going to find answers by searching the past.

The cycle of exploration and discovery begins anew.

PRIVATE
KNOCK KNOCK
Usually, history's questions exhilarate me.

This time, my history is the question.

I'm afraid.

WE ALMOST THERE, GERTIE?

MIND WHO SEES YOU STROLLING IN HERE, CARTER. RESTRICTED ACCESS.

MY BOSS WON'T EXACTLY BELIEVE THAT I LET A HANDSOME, YOUNG ADVENTURER RIDE UP FRONT BECAUSE YOU SAVED MY ANCESTOR'S LIFE FROM OLD BONEY AT WATERLOO.

SORRY, AND SORRY FOR POPPING IN UNANNOUNCED LAST NIGHT. THANKS FOR LETTING ME FLOP ON YOUR COUCH. HOPE I DIDN'T WAKE BERT AND THE KIDS.

BERT KNOWS YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU COME IN LOOKING LIKE YOU WAS TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN THE PUB.

NEXT TIME, CALL ME BEFOREHAND. WE'LL START THE JOURNEY TOGETHER.

BELIEVE ME, YOU DIDN'T WANT TO BE THERE. WASN'T A PINT IN SIGHT.

YOU DON'T WANT TO GO WHERE I'M HEADED EITHER. SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS COMING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN STOP IT.

CARRYING THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD ON YOUR BACK AGAIN, EH? OLD AUNT LOU USED TO SAY YOU NEEDED TO RELAX MORE.

SHE ALSO USED TO SAY THAT LIFE IS A RIVER.

YOU MIGHT BUMP AGAINST ONE BANK, AND YOU MIGHT BUMP AGAINST THE OTHER. BUT YOU ALWAYS GET WHERE YOU'RE GOING.

INSTEAD OF RIVERS AND BANKS, I GUESS IT'S ALL TUBES AND RAILS NOW. BUT LOU'S WORDS ARE STILL TRUE.

THAT'S JUST IT, GERTIE. I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M GOING. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE I'VE SEEN.

YOU'RE GOING THE SAME PLACE WE ALL ARE.

16.5%

RUSSELL

MEMOIR

"THE END OF THE LINE."

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

