

## THE STORY OF SINUHE

**T**he *Story of Sinuhe* was once regarded as a more or less factual account of the adventures of an Egyptian courtier copied from an inscription in his tomb. No trace of a real Sinuhe, however, has been found through tomb reliefs, statuary, or stelae. The story is a literary narrative—given its development, the psychology of the protagonist, the use of language, and the picture of the times in Syria and Palestine. Sinuhe is a resourceful man of his times, a prototype of the proper official at a time of rising prosperity in Egypt and its relations abroad. Impelled by some inner force he cannot explain to flee from the court, he makes his own way and recognizes later both the necessity to return to his king and the advantage of a traditional burial and funerary rites. The story begins with the death of the founder of Dynasty 12, Amenemhet I, and the report of his death made to the army headed by his son, coregent, and successor, Senwosret I. The treatment of the latter in the story is propagandistic.

With the exception of religious texts and various standard formulas, few other compositions are represented in as many copies or partial copies. Two papyri of Dynasties 12 and 13 provide a fairly complete text. In the Ramesside period in Dynasties 19 and 20 master scribes and their students copied the text in school on limestone flakes (ostraca). One of these has virtually the whole text inscribed on both sides of a large flake: J. W. B. Barns, *The Ashmolean Ostracum of Sinuhe* (Oxford, 1952). The chapter headings are not in the original text; they have been added as an aid to understanding the main divisions of the nar-

*rative and for reference. The standard text is now Roland Koch, Die Erzählung des Sinuhe (Brussels, 1990). See extensive bibliography under Sinuhe.*

W.K.S.

## INTRODUCTION

3,1 The hereditary noble and commander, warden and district officer of the estates of the sovereign in the lands of the Asiatics,<sup>1</sup> this truly beloved royal acquaintance, the follower Sinuhe, said:

I was a follower who followed his lord, a servant of the king's harem and of the hereditary princess, greatest of praise, wife of [King] Senwosret in Khnumet-sut and daughter of [King] Amenemhet in Ka-nofru, Nofru, the possessor of an honored state.<sup>2</sup>

### DEATH OF AMENEMHET I AND SINUHE'S FLIGHT

Year 30, month 3 of Akhet, day 7. The God ascended to his horizon, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Sehetepibre. He penetrated the sky, being joined to the sun disk, the God's body being mixed with that of him who made him.<sup>3</sup>

10 The capital was silent, desires were weak, the Great Double Gate was locked, / the court was with head upon knee,<sup>4</sup> and the nobles were mourning. Now His Majesty had dispatched an expeditionary force to the land of the Tjemehi with his eldest son as its leader, the good God, Senwosret. He had been sent to strike the foreign lands and to smite those who were among the Tjehenu people.<sup>5</sup> And now he was returning, having brought back captives of the Tjehenu people and all kinds of cattle without number. The Companions of the Palace sent to the Western Half to inform the king's son of the affairs which had taken place in the council chamber.

1. The inhabitants of Palestine and Syria are designated in this text as the Amu, the Setyu, and the Pedjtyu (bowmen); the first two terms are rendered as "Asiatics."
2. Sinuhe identifies himself here as an official of Queen Nofru, daughter of Amenemhet I, and wife of his son and successor, Senwosret I. Ka-nofru and Khnumet-sut are respectively the pyramid residence towns of these two first rulers of Dynasty 12.
3. A terse announcement of the death of Amenemhet I.
4. The position of mourners.
5. The Tjemehu and Tjehenu, people living to the west of Egypt, are Libyan tribes.

20 When the messengers found him upon the road / and reached him at dusk,  
he did not delay for a moment. The Falcon flew off with his followers  
without letting his expeditionary force know it.

B,1 Now [they had] written to the sons of the king who were in his follow-  
ing in this expeditionary force. When it was being read out / to one of  
them, I was standing by and I heard his voice, as he spoke, being in the  
vicinity of a conspiracy. My senses were disturbed, my arms spread out, and  
trembling came over every part (of me). I took myself off by bounds (?) to  
find for myself a place of concealment. I placed myself between two shrubs  
in order to separate the road from its traveler. I went south. I did not plan to  
reach the capital, for I anticipated riots might occur, and I would not be  
able to say "life" after him (the king). I crossed the (place called) The Two  
Truths in the vicinity of The Sycamore, and I landed at The Island of  
10 Snefru. I waited at the edge of / the cultivation. I set forth at daybreak and I  
came upon a man standing in the middle of the road. He greeted me re-  
spectfully, for he was frightened. When the time of evening meal came, I  
arrived at the wharf of Negau. It was with the help of the west wind that I  
crossed over in a boat without a rudder. I passed by to the east of the  
Quarry, above the Mistress of the Red Mountain (that is, the opposite side  
of the river, beyond the cultivation, in the desert), and I gave a path to  
my feet northward (until) I touched the Walls of the Prince, which had  
been made to check the Asiatics and to crush the sand-travelers. I took a  
crouched position in the brush out of fear that the guard on duty on the  
20 walls might see. I went / by night, and when day came, I had reached Peten.  
I alighted at the Island of Kem-wer. Thirst overcame me and it hastened me  
on; I was parched, my throat dry. And I said: This is the taste of death. But I  
raised up my heart and gathered together my limbs. I heard the sound of the  
lowing of cattle, and I looked upon Asiatics. Their bedouin chief recognized  
me, a man who had been in Egypt. He gave me water and boiled milk for  
me, and I went with him to his tribe, and what they did for me was good.<sup>6</sup>

30 One land gave me to (another) land. I set out for Byblus (near Beirut),  
and I returned to Qedem. I spent / half a year there. It was Amusinenshi<sup>7</sup>

6. In this description of Sinuhe's precipitous flight he indicates that he intended to flee to the south but was set on a northern course through the drifting downstream of the rudderless boat. The places designated as The Two Truths, The Sycamore, and The Island of Snefru may lie in the pyramid area of Memphis. See H. Goedicke, in *JEA* 43 (1957): 77–85.

7. An Egyptianized version of an Amorite (West Semitic) name.

who brought me back: he was the chief of Upper Retenu.<sup>8</sup> He said to me: You will be well with me, for you will hear the speech of Egypt. He said this for he knew my reputation. He had heard of my intelligence, for the people of Egypt who were there with him bore witness to me. Then he said to me: Why have you come here? Has anything happened at the capital? Then I said to him: The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Sehetepibre, has proceeded to the horizon, and no one knows what may happen because of this. But I then spoke equivocally:<sup>9</sup> When I returned from an expedition in the land of the Tjemehu, one announced (that) to me. My mind vacillated. My  
 40 heart was not in my body, and it brought / me to the ways of flight. (But) no one accused me, no one spat in my face. No reproach was heard, and my name was not heard in the mouth of the town crier. I do not know what brought me to this land. It was like the plan of a God.

## PRAISE OF SENWOSRET I

He said to me: How shall that land fare without him, that efficient God the awe of whom is throughout the foreign lands like Sakhmet in a year of pestilence?<sup>10</sup> I said to him so that I might answer him: To be certain, his son has entered the palace and has taken over the inheritance of his father. He is a God, indeed, without peer. No other came into being before him.<sup>11</sup> He is a master of knowledge, excellent in planning and efficient in commanding,  
 50 one by whose command one comes forth and goes down. / It was he who controlled the foreign lands while his father was in his palace. He reported to him what he (the father) decreed had come to happen. He is a champion who acts with his scimitar, a fighter without anyone like him when he is seen attacking the bowmen and engaging the fray. He is one who bends back the horn and renders hands powerless, so that his enemies cannot muster their ranks. He is vengeful when he cracks skulls, and no one can stand up to him. He steps wide when he annihilates the fugitive. There is no success for the one who shows his back to him. He is adamant at the moment of contact. He comes again and does not show his back. He is stalwart of heart

8. A designation for part of Palestine and Syria.

9. The equivocal statement seems to lie in the fact that the announcement was made to the king's son, not to Sinuhe himself.

10. Sakhmet is the lioness-headed goddess responsible for pestilence.

11. The following amounts to a hymn in praise of Senwosret I and is regarded as a propagandistic element of the text.

60 when he sees a crowd, and he does not allow cowardice around him. / He is eager when he falls upon the retinue, and he is joyful when he plunders the bow-people. As soon as he takes up his shield, he strikes down. He need not repeat the act of killing, for there is no one who can deflect his arrow nor one who can draw his bow. The bowmen retreat before him as if before the might of the great goddess. He fights on having forseen the outcome, and he takes no care for the remnants. But he is well-favored and very gentle; through love he takes. His city desires him more than herself, and they rejoice because of him more than for their god. Now that he is king, husbands and wives rejoice because of him. While still in the egg, he conquered, and his face was set to it from birth. It is he who has enriched those  
70 born with him, / for he is one whom god has given. How joyful is this land now that he has reigned. He is one to extend borders. He has vanquished the southlands, and he will not even have to think about the northlands, for he was made to smite the Asiatics and crush the sandcrossers. Write to him, and let him know your name. Do not utter sedition against his Majesty, for he will do for you that which his father did and he will not fail to do good to a foreign land which is loyal to him.

## SINUHE IN PALESTINE

And then he said to me: Indeed, Egypt is fortunate, now that she knows that he flourishes. You are here, and you shall be with me, and what I shall do for you will be good. He placed me in front of his children, and he married me to (literally, moored me to) his eldest daughter. He allowed  
80 me to pick from his country / the choicest part of what he owned on his border with another country.

It was a wonderful land called Yaa. There were cultivated figs in it and grapes, and more wine than water. Its honey was abundant, and its olive trees numerous. On its trees were all varieties of fruit. There were barley and emmer, and there was no end to all varieties of cattle.

That which fell to my lot as a favored one was great. He set me up as chief of a tribe of the finest in his land. I obtained rations as daily disbursements and wine as a daily requirement, cooked meat and roasted fowl,  
90 beside the desert game. / They hunted for me and they set (food) down before me, in addition to the catch of my hunting dogs. They made for me many sweet things with milk in everything cooked. I spent many years while my offspring became strong men, each man managing his (own) tribe.

The messenger who came north and went south to the capital stayed with me, and I made all Egyptians stay. I gave water to the thirsty man, and I put the wanderer back on the road. I rescued the man who was robbed.

100 When the Asiatics began to stir and to oppose the authority of the chiefs of the foreign lands, I counseled their marches. This ruler / of Retenu had me spend many years as an officer of his troops. As to any land which I left, when I had made my attack it was driven off from its cultivation and wells. I had plundered its cattle and brought back its inhabitants, and their produce was taken. I killed the people in it by my strong arm, my bow, my maneuvers, and my efficient advice. It went well with me in his favor, for he loved me and he recognized my bravery. He placed me at the head of his offspring when he saw my arms grow so strong.

## THE COMBAT

110 There came a strong man of Retenu to challenge me / at my tent.<sup>12</sup> He was a champion without equal, and he had subdued all of it. He said that he would fight with me, for he thought to ruin me. He planned to plunder my cattle, at the urging of his tribe. But that chief consulted with me, and I said: I did not know him. I am not a confederate of his that I could stride about in his camp. Had it ever happened that I entered his women's rooms, or have I scaled his walls? It is ill will, for he sees me carrying out your affairs. I am like a bull of a grazing herd in the midst of another herd. The bull of the  
120 kine attacks him, / but the (Egyptian) bull prevails against him. Is a subject loved when he acts the master?

There is no foreign bowman who is an ally of a Delta man. What is it that can join a papyrus plant to a rock? Does a bull wish to fight? Then a champion bull will wish to retreat through fear of one who might equal him. But if his intention is to fight, let him say what he wants. Is God ignorant of what he has ordained, knowing (as he does) how the matter stands?

I spent the night stretching my bow and I shot my arrows. I gave an edge to my dagger, and I polished my weapons. When daybreak came,  
130 Retenu had come. / It had urged on its tribes, and it had collected the lands of both its halves. It had intended this combat.

12. The following account of the fight with the champion of Retenu has frequently been compared to the David and Goliath duel, for which it may have served as a literary prototype. See G. Lanczkowski, in *MDAIK* 16 (1958): 214–18.

He (the strong man) came out to me where I was waiting, and I placed myself near him. Every heart burned for me, wives and husbands yelled. Every heart ached for me, saying: Is there another strong man who could fight against him? His shield, his axe, and his armful of javelins fell (to me). After I had escaped his weapons, I made his remaining arrows pass by me, and not one was left over. Then he let out a yell, for he thought to ruin me, and he approached me. I shot him, my arrow fixed in his neck. He  
 140 shouted and fell upon his nose. / I felled him with his (own) axe. I yelled my war cry over his back. Every Asiatic yelped. I gave praise to Montu,<sup>13</sup> while his adherents mourned for him. This ruler, Amusinenshi, took me in his arms, and he kissed me in my clasp.

I brought away his possessions, I seized his cattle. What he had thought to do to me I did to him. I took away what was in his tent. I stripped his camp, and it was abundant for me therein. I became rich in treasure, a great proprietor of cattle.

God acts in such a way to be merciful to one whom He had blamed, one whom He led astray to another land. For today His heart is appeased.  
 150 A fugitive fled / because of his situation, but my renown is in the capital. A wanderer wandered through hunger, but I give bread to my neighbor. Through nakedness a man departed from his land, but I have white clothes and fine linen. A man hurried for lack of someone to send, but I have many servants. My house is fine, and my dwelling place is wide. The thought of me is in the palace.

## SINUHE WISHES TO RETURN TO EGYPT

O God, whoever you are, who decreed this flight, may you be merciful and may you set me in the capital. Perhaps you will let me see the place where my desire lives. What can be more important than joining my dead  
 160 body to the land where / I was born? Come, help me! May a good solution come to pass. May God give me satisfaction. May He act similarly to better the end of one whom He had made miserable and be concerned about one whom He had shunted off to live in a foreign land. If today He is merciful, and He hearkens to the prayer of a man far off, may He change my region whence I roamed the earth for Him to the place from which He brought me.

13. The Egyptian god particularly associated with battle prowess.

May the King of Egypt be merciful to me, and may I live on his bounty. May I greet the mistress of the land who is in his palace, and may I attend to the errands of her children.

170 My body will be youthful again. For old age has come down on me and feebleness has hurried upon me. My eyes are heavy, and my arms are immobile. / My feet fail to proceed, and my senses are exhausted. I am near to passing on, when they shall send me to the cities of eternity. But may I still serve the Mistress-of-All that she may say something good for me to her children. May she pass eternity above me.<sup>14</sup>

Now this report was made to His Majesty, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Kheperkare,<sup>15</sup> who will be judged right, concerning this state in which I was. His Majesty sent to me with provisions of the royal bounty. He rejoiced the heart of this servant as might be done for a ruler of a foreign land. And the king's children who were in his palace had me hear their messages.

#### THE ROYAL EDICT

180 Copy of the decree brought to this servant regarding his being brought back to Egypt: The Horus Life of Births, the Two Ladies Life of Births, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Kheperkare, Son of Re / Senwosret, living forever. The decree of the king to the follower Sinuhe: This decree of the king is brought to you to inform you that you have traversed the foreign countries and have come forth from Qedem to Retenu. By your heart's counsel to you, land has given you to land. What have you done that one should act against you? You have not blasphemed that one should reprove your words. You have not spoken in the council of the elders that one should reproach your speech. This idea of yours, it took over your senses, although there was nothing in my mind against you. This heaven of yours, which is in the palace, she is well and she flourishes today as in her former state in the kingship of the land, with her children in the audience hall. You shall pile up the treasures which they give you, and you shall live off their

14. It seems that the queen is here identified with the sky goddess; her image, surrounded with stars, is generally placed on the underside of the coffin or sarcophagus lid above the body. For old age, see the beginning of Ptahhotep.

15. Senwosret I.



190 bounty. Come back to Egypt, and you shall see the capital in which you were born. You shall kiss the ground at the Great Double Gate, and you shall associate with the Companions.

Today / old age has begun for you, and potency has left you. Think about the day of burial, the passing over to an honored state. The night will be appointed for you with oils and poultices from the arms of Tayet (goddess of weaving). A procession will be made for you on the day of interment, the anthropoid sarcophagus (overlaid) with gold [leaf], the head with lapis lazuli, and the sky above you as you are placed in the outer coffin and dragged by teams of oxen preceded by singers. The dance of the Muu will be performed at your tomb, and the necessary offerings will be invoked for you. They will slaughter at the entrance of your tomb chapel, your pillars to be set up in limestone as is done for the royal children. You shall not die in a foreign land, and Asiatics will not escort you. You shall not be placed in a ram's skin as they make your grave. All of this is too much for one who has roamed the earth. Take thought for your dead body and return.

## SINUHE'S REACTION AND HIS REPLY

200 It was while I was standing / in the midst of my tribe that this decree reached me; it was after I had prostrated myself and touched the ground that it was read to me. I spread it out (the dirt) over my chest. Then I went about my encampment rejoicing and saying: How could such a thing be done for a servant whose sense led him astray to the land of the barbarians? Indeed, (your) benevolence is excellent, O you who have saved me from death. Your *ka* will allow me to spend the end of my life with my body in the capital.

Copy of the reply to this decree. The servant of the palace Sinuhe says: In peace, in peace. This flight which this servant did in his ignorance is well known by your Ka, O good God, Lord of the Two Lands, whom Re loves and whom Montu, Lord of Thebes, favors, as well as Amun, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, Sobek-Re, Lord of Sumenu, Horus, Hathor, all the gods of Egypt, Atum and his Ennead, Sopdu, Neferbau, Semsaru, Horus the Easterner, the Mistress of Yemet, may she enfold your head, the council upon the flood waters, Min-Horus in the midst of the desert lands, Wereret, the Mistress of / Punt, Nut, Haoreis-Re, and the gods who are the

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Lords of the Beloved Land and the Islands of the Great Green.<sup>16</sup> They give life and prosperity to your nostrils; they grant you their bounty. They give you eternity without its end and everlastingness without its limit. Fear of you is repeated in the lowlands and in the highlands, for all that the sun disk encircles is conquered for you. Such is the prayer of this servant to his lord who has rescued him from the West.

Lord of perception, who perceives the people, may he perceive in the Majesty of the palace that this servant was afraid to speak. It is a serious matter to repeat. The great God, a likeness of Re, knows the mind of one who has inquired after him 'of his own accord'. For this servant is in the hands of someone who takes thought for him; I am set in his guidance. Your Majesty is the conquering Horus; your arms prevail over all lands. May now your Majesty command that there be brought Meki from Qedem, / Qhentiuwash from out of Keshu, and Menus, those who set your authority over the lands of the Fenkhu.<sup>17</sup> They are rulers whose names are worthy and who have been brought up in your love. Not to mention Retenu, for it belongs to you even as your hounds. This flight which your servant made, it was not premeditated. It was not in my mind. I did not prepare it. I cannot say what separated me to this country. It was like a dream: as when a Delta man sees himself in Elephantine (Aswan) or a man of the marshlands in Nubia. Yet I was not afraid. No one chased me. I did not hear a word of censure. No one heard my name in the mouth of the town crier. Except that my body cringed, my feet scurried, and my senses overwhelmed me, with the God who decreed this flight / drawing me on. I was not stubborn before. A man is modest when his homeland is known, for Re has placed the fear of you throughout the land and the dread of you in every foreign land. Whether I am in the capital or in this place, yours is everything which is covered by this horizon. The sun disk rises at your bidding, and the water of the river is drunk if you wish. The air of the heavens is breathed if you speak. Now that this servant has been sent for, this servant will hand over (his property) to his children, whom he has engendered in this place. May Your Majesty act as he wishes, for one lives by the air which you give. Re, Horus, and Hathor

16. The gods who make up this list are representative of the different parts of Egypt and the neighboring lands. See J. Yoyotte, in *Kêmi* 17 (1964): 69–73.

17. These three foreign rulers are thus commended by Sinuhe to the king. The Fenkhu are later known as the Phoenicians. But see Schneider in Sinuhe Bibliography.

love your noble nostrils; which Montu, Lord of Thebes, wishes that they live forever.

## SINUHE'S RETURN

240 I was allowed to spend a day in Yaa to transfer my goods to my children. My eldest son was in charge of my tribe. / My tribe and all my possessions were in his hands, as well as all my serfs, my cattle, my fruit, and all my productive trees. This servant proceeded south. I halted at the Ways of Horus.<sup>18</sup> The commander in charge of the patrol there sent a message to the capital to give them notice. His Majesty had them send a capable overseer of field laborers of the royal estate and with him ships laden with presents of the royal bounty for the Asiatics who had come with me to lead me to the Ways of Horus. I called each one of them by name. Each servant was at his task. I started out and raised sail. (Dough) was kneaded and strained (for beer) beside me until I reached the wharf of Itjtowy.<sup>19</sup>

## SINUHE AT THE PALACE

250 When dawn came and it was morning, I was summoned. Ten men came and ten men went to usher me to the palace. I touched my forehead to the ground between the sphinxes. / The royal children were standing in the gateway to meet me. The Companions who showed me into the pillared court set me on the way to the reception hall. I found His Majesty upon the Great Throne set in a recess (paneled) with fine gold. As I was stretched out on my belly, I lost consciousness in his presence. This God addressed me in a friendly way, and I was like a man caught by nightfall. My soul fled and my body shook. My heart was not in my body: I could not tell life from death.

His Majesty said to one of these Companions: Lift him up and let him speak to me. And His Majesty said: See, you have returned, now that you have roamed the foreign lands. Exile has ravaged you; you have grown old. Old age has caught up with you. The burial of your body is no small matter, for now you will not be escorted by the bowmen. Do not creep any more.  
260 You did not speak / when your name was called out. You shall not fear

18. A frontier station on the border of Egypt.

19. The landing place of the capital, the residence city of the king.

punishment. It was with a timorous reply that I answered: What has my lord said to me? If I try to answer, there is no shortcoming on my part toward God. It is fear which is in my body, like that which brought to pass the fated flight. I am in your presence. Life belongs to you. May Your Majesty do as He wishes.

The royal children were then brought in, and His Majesty said to the queen: Here is Sinuhe, who has returned as an Asiatic whom the bedouin have raised. She let out a very great cry, and the royal children shouted all together. They said before His Majesty: It is not really he, O Sovereign, my lord. His Majesty said: It is he indeed.

270 Then they brought their *menyat*-necklaces, their rattles, and their *sistra* with them, and they offered them to His Majesty. May your arms reach out / to something nice, O enduring king, (to) the ornaments of the Lady of Heaven. May the Golden One<sup>20</sup> give life to your nostrils, and may the Lady of the Stars be joined to you. The crown of Upper Egypt will go northward, and the crown of Lower Egypt will go southward that they may unite and come together at the word of Your Majesty, and the cobra goddess Wadjet will be placed on your forehead. As you have kept your subjects from evil, so may Re, Lord of the Two Lands, be compassionate toward you. Hail to you. And also to the Lady of All. Lay to rest your javelin, set aside your arrow. Give breath to the breathless. Give us this happy reward, this bedouin chief Simehyet,<sup>21</sup> the bowman born in Egypt. It was through fear of you that he took flight and through dread of you that he left the land. Yet there is no one whose face turns white at the sight of your face. The eye  
280 which has seen you will not be afraid.

His Majesty said: He shall not fear, / he shall not be afraid. He shall be a Companion among the nobles and he shall be placed in the midst of the courtiers. Proceed to the robing hall to wait upon him.

#### SINUHE REINSTATED

When I came from the robing hall, the royal children gave me their hands, and we went through the Great Double Gate. I was assigned to the house of a king's son. Fine things were in it, a cooling room in it, and

20. The goddess Hathor.

21. Si-mehyet, "son of the northwind," is a playful variant on Si-nuhe, "son of the sycamore."

representations of the horizon.<sup>22</sup> Valuables of the treasury were in it, vestments of royal linen were in every apartment, and first-grade myrrh of the royal courtiers whom he loves. / Every domestic servant was about his prescribed task. Years were caused to pass from my body. I was dipilated, and my hair was combed out. A load was given to the desert, and clothes to the sand-dwellers. I was outfitted with fine linen and rubbed with the finest oil. I passed the night on a bed. I gave the sand to those who live on it and wood oil to those who rub themselves with it. A house of a 'plantation owner', which had belonged to a Companion, was given to me. Many craftsmen were building it, and all its trees were planted anew. Meals were brought from the palace three and four times a day, in addition to what the royal children gave. There was not a moment of interruption. /

A pyramid of stone was built for me in the midst of the pyramids. The overseers of stonecutters of the pyramids marked out its ground plan. The draftsman sketched in it, and the master sculptors carved in it. The overseers of works who were in the necropolis gave it their attention. Care was taken to supply all the equipment which is placed in a tomb chamber. *Ka*-servants were assigned to me, and a funerary estate was settled on me with fields attached, at (my) mooring place, as is done for a Companion of the first order. My statue was overlaid with gold leaf, its apron in electrum. It was His Majesty who ordered it to be done. There was no commoner for whom the like had ever been done. So I remained in / the favor of the king until the day of mooring came.

Its beginning has come to its end, as it has been found in writing.  
(The traditional colophon marks the end of the story.)

22. Perhaps wall frescoes.