

Motel of Mysteries

Although it seemed hardly possible, the contents of the Inner Chamber were even more dazzling than those already discovered. Harriet immediately began tagging and identifying each item while Howard drew conclusions. As he had predicted, a second body was present, and this one appeared to have been buried with more care and ritual than the first. Wearing the Ceremonial Head Dress(No. 8), it had been placed in a highly polished white sarcophagus(No. 9), which had in turn been sealed behind an exquisite and elaborately hung translucent curtain(No. 10).

The proportions of the sarcophagus had been precisely determined to prevent the deceased from ever sliding down into a fully reclined position. The similar postures of the two bodies led Carson to the conclusion that the proper burial position had the chin resting as much as possible on the chest. Although the outer surface of the sarcophagus was plain, there were two sets of ceremonial markings on the inside. The first consisted of ten parallel rows of slightly raised discs along the floor of the sarcophagus over which the body had been placed. The second was an almost entirely faded line that ran all the way around the walls parallel to and about ten inches above the floor. Two water trumpets, one about five feet above the other, projected from the end wall facing the deceased. Some of the music required during the final ceremony was produced by forcing water from the sacred spring through the trumpets and out through a small hole in the floor of the sarcophagus. Other music came from the music box(No. 6) situated above the Sacred Urn(No. 2). Articles No. 1 and No. 4 were used in preparing the body for its final journey and No. 5 was the Sacred Parchment, pieces of which were periodically placed in the urn during the ceremony. Carson was overjoyed to find that the Sacred Point was perfectly preserved on the sacred parchment. Very few had previously been uncovered, and none in such remarkable condition. The Headband, which bore the ceremonial chant, and the Sacred Collar (not numbered) were still in place on the Sacred Urn to which they had been secured following the ceremony.

Source: Macaulay, David. Motel of the Mysteries. Graphia Books, 1979.

Motel of Mysteries Observation Sheet:			
Artifact (name and/ or number)	Your Illustration Based on the reading, what does the object look like?	Your Prediction of the artifacts possible uses:	Look at the Picture What is this item?
Sarcophagus			
Water trumpets			
Sacred collar			
Headband			
2			

5			
6			
8			
10			

What do you think about these people, are they advanced or primitive? What similarities are there to your culture?