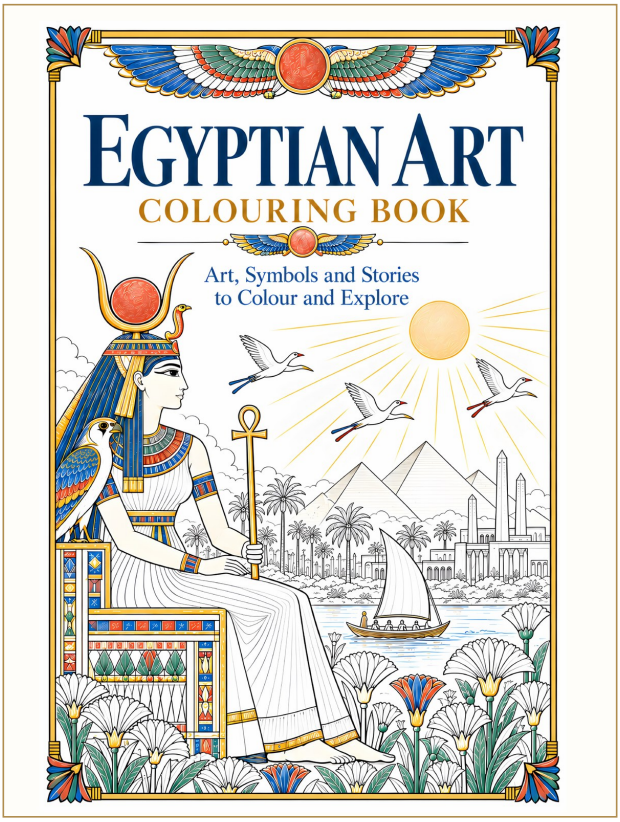


ISIS

Isis was the most powerful magician among the gods, and she was clever enough to trick even Ra, the sun god. She made a snake from his spit mixed with earth, and when it bit him she agreed to cure him only if he told her his secret name. He gave in, and from then on her magic was unequalled. Her name means ‘throne’, which is why she wears one on her head. Here she spreads the great wings with which she fanned the breath of life back into her murdered husband Osiris. Isis was loved for longer and more widely than almost any other Egyptian god. People worshipped her right across the Roman Empire, as far away as Pompeii and even Britain, and the very last known writing in Egyptian hieroglyphs was carved at her island temple of Philae, about 1,600 years ago. Her dress is usually white or red, and Egyptian painters often coloured such wings in bands of red, blue and green.

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