

THE SPIRIT BOATS

By Minna Irving

*Within the many-chambered tomb
For Tut-ankh-Amen built,
Among the alabaster jars,
The faience and the gilt,
Were placed the spirit-boats designed
To bear his soul away
To happy shores by Horus blest
With everlasting day.*

*Pink shallops far more fit to hold
Young loves perfumed and curled
Than navigate the dreary, dark
And haunted underworld
Light fairy vessels that should rock
On waters laced with foam,
By sunny isles or emerald woods
Where Pan was wont to roam.*

*No doubt the ancient monarch hoped
On blue Egyptian nights
To steer his bark to mundane parts
And taste of old delights
Between the lotus-lilies drift
Along the star-lit Nile,
And play the sistrum for his queen
While basking in her smile.*

*Behold above the dusky hills
The new moon's silver boat
Upon its bright celestial way
Serenely certain float!
Who knows? Mark Antony its course
From sky to earth may guide,
To visit once again the scene
Where Cleopatra died.*



Virgil
Finlay