

# THE CURSE OF THE TOMB ROBBERS

AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PUZZLE MYSTERY



ANDY SEED

JAMES  
WESTON LEWIS



For Isla and Etta – A.S.  
For Mabli Clem, with all my love – J.W.L.



First published 2022 by Nosy Crow Ltd  
The Crow's Nest, 14 Baden Place,  
Crosby Row, London, SE1 1YW, UK

Nosy Crow Eireann Ltd  
44 Orchard Grove, Kenmare,  
Co Kerry, V93 FY22, Ireland

[www.nosycrow.com](http://www.nosycrow.com)

ISBN 978 1 83994 657 8 (HB)  
ISBN 978 1 78800 965 2 (PB)

Nosy Crow and associated logos are trademarks  
and/or registered trademarks of Nosy Crow Ltd.

Published in collaboration with the British Museum.  
With special thanks to John Taylor at the British Museum for his contribution and advice.

Text © Andy Seed 2022  
Illustrations © James Weston Lewis 2022

The right of Andy Seed to be identified as the author and James Weston Lewis  
to be identified as the illustrator of this work has been asserted.

All rights reserved.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not,  
by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, hired out or otherwise circulated  
in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.  
No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,  
or transmitted in any form or by any means  
(electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise)  
without the prior written permission of Nosy Crow Ltd.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in China.  
Papers used by Nosy Crow are made from wood  
grown in sustainable forests.

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2 (HB)  
1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2 (PB)

# CONTENTS



Introduction	4	
Thieves in the Desert	6	
A Marketplace Plot	10	n
In the House of Scribes	14	n
A Message in the Vizier's Kitchen	18	n
Crossing the Nile	22	nn
The Embalming Rooms	24	nn
Objects for the Dead	28	nn
At the Wall of the Gods	30	nnn
The Mystery of the Pyramids	34	nnn
Entering the Secret Passage	36	nnn
Terror in the Burial Chamber	40	nnnn
The End of the Curse?	42	nnnn
Puzzle Solutions	46	nnnn
Glossary	48	nnnn





# THIEVES IN THE DESERT

"It's just SO hot here," said Nub, the desert sand burning under his bare feet.

"I know, but can't you feel how special this place is?" replied Iteti. "My father said that hundreds of important people are buried here – priests and scribes and palace officials."

"I'm not surprised they died, coming out here."

"Oi!" cried Iteti. "Don't make fun of the dead! They might be listening."

Nub was about to say sorry when he heard voices. Clambering to the top of the hill, the two friends peered from behind a rock. Across the narrow valley, a group of men were hurrying over the sand, carrying jars and decorated boxes.

"Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" asked Iteti.

"Tomb robbers!" whispered Nub, shaking with anger.



## DID YOU KNOW?

The ancient Egyptians believed that when a person died, their spirit would travel to a place called the underworld, where they would have to pass a series of tests to get into paradise. To help them on their journey, the dead person's family would bury useful objects with them, such as furniture, precious jewels and even food.



Nub and Iteti watched, horrified, as the men loaded their plunder on to two donkeys and headed out of the valley. But as the thieves left, Nub saw one of them drop a small scrap of papyrus.

Carefully, Nub and Iteti edged down into the valley and picked it up.  
“Look, there’s a message on it!” said Nub.



## PUZZLE

What does the message on the scrap of papyrus say? It is written using signs called hieroglyphs. Use the guide at the back of the book to crack this ancient Egyptian code and discover the secret word the robbers left behind.



## CODE CLUE

Many of the signs the ancient Egyptians used stand for sounds. In this case, each sign represents the sound of a letter.





# CROSSING THE NILE

The mighty River Nile stretched out before them, 500 metres wide and alive with activity. There were boats of all kinds, fishermen, traders carrying goods and people drawing water along the banks.

Nub asked a farmer collecting water with a shaduf where they could get a ferry across to the pyramids.

"Just there," said the man, pointing at a wooden jetty. "But you'll have to pay for it."

Iteti looked at the bracelets on her arm. "I could trade some of my jewellery?"

"Phew, good idea," replied Nub. "It's better than half an onion."

Soon they were on the windy river in a small wooden boat.

The two friends were thinking the same thing: would they cross safely and what would they do if they caught up with the gang?

Why are we going into the reeds again?

Careful, that crocodile is HUNGRY!

Yikes! Which way do we go, Nub?

DID YOU KNOW?

The River Nile was remarkably important to the ancient Egyptians. It brought them food by watering and enriching the farmland, allowed trade with other people, made travel easier and provided fish and water all year round. It did have its dangers: strong currents, floods, hippos and child-eating crocodiles!



## PUZZLE

There is only one safe route across the river for Nub and Iteti's little boat. Can you find it? Can you also spot the two mischievous stowaway monkeys?