Published by Sweet Cherry Publishing Limited
Unit 36, Vulcan House,
Vulcan Road,
Leicester, LE5 3EF
United Kingdom

First published in the UK in 2022
2022 edition

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

ISBN: 978-1-78226-816-1

© Pip Murphy

Christie and Agatha's Detective Agency:
Tombful of Trouble

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or using any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

The right of Pip Murphy to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988. The moral rights of the author have been asserted.

Cover Design by Roberta Tedeschi and Amy Booth
Illustrations by Roberta Tedeschi

www.sweetcherrypublishing.com

Printed and bound in Turkey

Christie and Agatha's Detective Agency

TOMBFUL OF TROUBLE



PIP MURPHY

Illustrated by
ROBERTA TEDESCHI

Sweet Cherry



CHAPTER ONE

Agatha had never been so hot in all her life. She had known that Egypt would be hot, just not *this* hot. She had already gone through all of the synonyms that she could find in the thesaurus she had brought with her from England. ‘Baking’, ‘scorching’, ‘boiling’ and ‘roasting’ all fitted her feelings perfectly.

‘Now I know how a cake feels in the oven,’ she said to her sister.

‘Me too,’ Christie groaned. ‘I don’t know how you can stand it in that suit, Auguste.’

Auguste, the girls’ Belgian friend, wasn’t sure how he was standing it, either. He was terribly sweaty despite the looseness of his suit’s fabric. Once or twice, he had even felt faint. However, the mere idea of dressing down in public made him positively nauseous. He would just have to put up with it.

The heat aside, the three children were all extremely excited to be in Egypt. None of them had ever been so far from home before. Mrs Dupont, Auguste’s mother, was a famous writer. When she had proposed that Christie



and Agatha accompany her and Auguste on her research trip to the North African country, the two sisters had jumped at the chance. Agatha thought it would prove a huge inspiration for her own writing. Christie, meanwhile, daydreamed about the thrilling adventures they might have there.

At that moment, they were bumping along a dusty road, in an equally dusty car, on the way to meet Mrs Dupont's friends.

'What are they called again?' asked Christie. 'Your friends, I mean.'

'They're called Lord and Lady Carnarvon,' Mrs Dupont told her. 'They're the ones funding that big dig that was in all the papers last year. The one led by Mr Howard Carter.'

'The tomb of the Egyptian king?' asked Agatha.

'Pharaoh,' said Auguste. 'Egyptian kings were called pharaohs.'

'What's this pharaoh called then?' asked Christie.

Auguste hesitated. 'Toot … toot …'

'Tutankhamun,' said his mother, smiling.

‘It’s a shame we weren’t here for that,’ said Christie, thinking how exciting it would have been to investigate a tomb.

Agatha privately agreed with her. She had read that when Mr Carter first entered the Pharoah’s tomb, someone asked if he could see anything. He had exclaimed ‘Yes, wonderful things!’ She would have liked to see such wonderful things herself.

‘Oh, it’s not all over and done with yet,’ said Mrs Dupont. ‘Apparently it’s going to take years and years to remove and catalogue everything in

the tomb. They’ve only just started on the burial chamber. They’re being very careful about it.’

Auguste, the biggest lover of order and method that the girls had ever met, looked thrilled at the idea.



‘If you were hoping to see the excavation in progress, you’re going to be disappointed I’m afraid,’ said Lady Carnarvon. She was leading the group into the drawing room of the fabulous house they were renting. ‘Everything’s suspended at the moment.’

‘Oh dear, why?’ asked Mrs Dupont.

‘Was there a murder?’ asked Christie, her eyes sparkling with excitement.

There was a laugh from one of the chairs in the drawing room. A moustached man with grey hair stood up, supporting his weight on a stick. ‘Well, we suspect that the pharaoh whose tomb it is might not have died peacefully,’ he said. ‘But nothing for the last three thousand years or so. I’m Lord Carnarvon, by the way. Pleased to meet you.’

‘Pleased to meet you, too,’ said the children.



The man looked rather sickly, thought Agatha. Was it really all right for him to be running around ancient tombs?

'So what *is* the problem?' asked Christie.

'Is it too hot?' asked Auguste.

Lord Carnarvon laughed again, although his laugh turned into a cough. 'Believe it or not, this is actually the cooler season,' he said. 'No, the official story is that Mr Howard Carter – he's the man in charge of the excavation – and myself have had a falling out. Difficulties with the press and the Egyptian

authorities. Something like that.'

Mrs Dupont raised an eyebrow. 'I see! And if I may ask, what is the *un*official story? What really happened?'

Their hosts exchanged a glance, then Lord Carnarvon nodded.

'I'm afraid,' said Lady Carnarvon, 'that things have been going missing–'

'Ha!' said Lord Carnarvon. 'There's no need to be so diplomatic around friends, dear. "Going missing." I *wish* things had been going missing! No, the truth of the matter is that a number of important, valuable artefacts have been stolen. There is a thief at the dig!'