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Opening extract from

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Chris Blake

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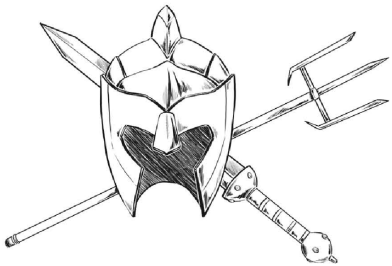
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CHAPTER 1

THE MUMMY

Squeak-thump, squeak-thump, squeak-thump. Tom Sullivan loved the noise that his trainers made on the shiny floor of the museum. He drank in the smell of wood polish and three-thousand-year-old dust. All the lights were off, apart from those in the display cabinets. All the visitors had gone home. It was just him and Dad.

He reached his dad's office. It was on the first floor, at the end of the Ancient Greece

section. The brass nameplate on the door said 'Dr James Sullivan, Archaeologist'.

"One day I'll have one just like it," Tom said to himself. "'Tom Sullivan, History Genius'. Ha!"

He knocked on the door.

"Hi, Dad, will you be long?" Tom asked.

Dad was poring over a sheaf of papers, which were scattered across his untidy desk. "Eh?" he replied.

"Do I have time to explore a bit more?" Tom said.

Dad looked up at him, his bright blue eyes staring out blankly from behind his glasses. "Oh, I'm not hungry, thanks," he said. "I don't like cheese and pickle." He turned his attention back to the papers.

Tom knew his dad was lost in a world of his own, full of pyramids and Romans

and Vikings. "I'm off to fight with some gladiators now, Dad," he said. "Maybe some cavemen too."

"That's nice," Dad mumbled.

Tom wandered through the familiar corridors, peering into the display cases of his favourite exhibits. In the hall of Ancient Greece, he admired the feathered Greek army helmets. In the Viking section, he marvelled at the shields and swords covered in strange letters. As he walked through the hall of Medieval Britain, he waved at some models of men wearing chainmail. Finally,



saving the best until last, he went down the stairs to the Ancient Egyptian section.

Tom loved history and liked to pretend he could travel through time. He lunged towards a brightly painted sarcophagus, using his pen as a sword. "Watch out, pharaoh!" he told the exhibit behind the glass. "I'm a deadly swordsman from the future. Your armies will never defeat me!"

Then, with flailing arms, he started to fight off a band of imaginary Ancient Egyptian attackers, running backwards as if he was being chased.



Tom stumbled and tripped, only noticing the statue labelled 'Goddess Isis' when it was too late. He smacked into it at full force.

The statue wobbled to the right, then it rocked back to the left. Tom rushed forward to save it. "Nooo…!" he cried. But he was too late. The statue toppled on to the floor and smashed into a million pieces.

"Uh oh," Tom gulped. "Dad's going to kill me! The museum's going to kill me! Everyone's going to kill me!"

Tom's heart pounded in his chest as he stared at the mess. There were pottery fragments everywhere. Then something very strange began to happen. The bits started to move and shake.

Tom gasped as five fingers reached out from what was left of the statue. The fingers were wrapped in dirty, torn bandages. Like

an Egyptian mummy! Tom stared in shock as the fingers stretched out into a hand, opening and closing as if it was trying to grab him. The hand was followed by a wrist, then an arm...

Suddenly a whole, groaning, child-sized mummy sprang from the wreckage. The shape of some sort of mummified animal stood next to it. Both were wrapped head to toe in crusty shreds of cloth, the loose ends flapping as they moved. They looked at Tom and started walking towards him.

