

Looming over the golden dunes of Egypt was an enormous stone jackal with a round, dimly lit hole in its bum. The entire thing was built from black and grey bricks.

The Tomb of the Jackals.

The unfortunate-looking hole beneath the jackal's tail was, in fact, the front door. Above this door, ancient lettering spelled out: "Tomb of the Jackals". Recently, the "s" had been crossed out so the sign now said "Tomb of the Jackal~~s~~".



This was because the hundred Jackal Mummies who once lived in the tomb had been turned into cactuses by Bab Sharkey.

Now there was only one jackal left.

Deep inside the tomb, Cainus the Jackal sat snarling. He wore a magic stone helmet that was shaped like a jackal's head. Like him, the helmet had a pointy snout and tall, pointy ears. The jackal helmet allowed Cainus to spy on Mumphis, the lost city of the Animal Mummies, which lay across the dunes.

The walls and houses of Mumphis were decorated with millions of little pictures – those ancient Egyptian pictures called *hieroglyphs*. They showed falcons, flowers, eyeballs, gods, cats and monsters. And some showed jackals.

Inside his helmet, Cainus could see through the eyes of all the jackal hieroglyphs – and hear through their ears. He'd been spying on the Animal Mummies all night. He'd watched them celebrate their new freedom ... and the death of his beloved mistress, the Unpharaoh.

“Curse those mummies!”
Cainus snarled under his helmet.

“They’re having such a jolly old time. How can they be SOOO happy when they look as shabby as that?”

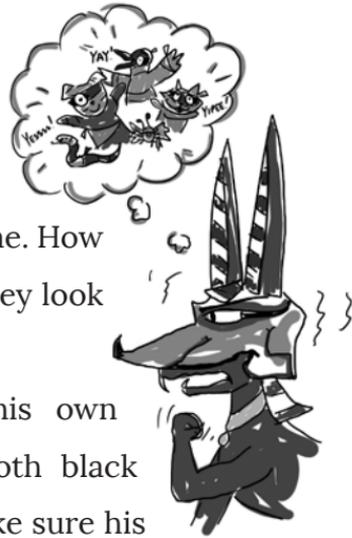
Cainus was obsessed with his own appearance. He patted his smooth black chest with a paw, checking to make sure his old mummy bandages hadn’t reappeared. No, it was all fine. His shiny fur felt like silk. Not a bandage within miles. The Unpharaoh had rejuvenated Cainus to a proper, living jackal, and he’d never looked better.

Looks can be deceiving, though. Cainus appeared stunning on the outside, but on the inside, he was miserable.

He was lonely.

He fiddled with the helmet, switching the view inside to yet another jackal hieroglyph in the city. He saw that the Animal Mummies had woken up and were starting a new day.

Cainus gasped. There he was – that ghastly boy!



Cainus watched Bab Sharkey walk about Mumphis. The boy was with his two horrid friends, the Fish Mummy and the Ibis Mummy. Bab took them around, offering advice to different Animal Mummies to help with their lives and businesses.



“Curse that Bob Sharkey!” said Cainus. “Or is it Brad Sharkey? Barb Sharkey? Whatever his name is, curse him and his huge brain. I hope that magic beard of his makes him so itchy, he scratches himself to death!”

It was cold and damp in the Tomb of the Jackals. Cainus was hungry, and desperate for warmth and conversation.

“I could run Mumphis better than him and

those mummies,” he moaned to himself. “Now that I’m a fully formed jackal, I could run that town all on my own. Dine at all the restaurants! Shop in all the shops! No longer would I be trapped in this sorry tomb, eating nothing but moths and sand.”

Moths and sand had been the diet of the Jackal Mummies for four thousand years.

Cainus was picturing himself shopping and trying on an array of new outfits when Bab Sharkey wandered near one of the jackal hieroglyphs. Now Cainus could see Bab close-up.

“Grrrrrrrr,” Cainus growled. “Before I can get near those Animal Mummies, I’ll need to get rid of that Pharaoh boy. Whatever his name is.”

Cainus lifted the heavy helmet off his head and set it aside. Eyes closed, he tried to stretch his sore neck by turning his head from side to side. But his head wouldn’t turn – something was stopping it. It was like there was a big pillow up against him.

He opened his eyes and screeched. The entire tomb was filled with moths. Around him was a cloud of them so thick, he could barely move his head!



Squealing, he leaped up. He ran around the tomb and waved his paws in front of his face, shoving through the thick clouds of moths as best he could.

He sprinted to his wardrobe and saw that the moths had eaten through all of his precious outfits and disguises. “Noooooooooo!” he cried, picking up some scrappy pieces of cloth. They’d once been a purple-and-yellow-striped jumpsuit. He glared at the tiny moths as they tucked into the fabric, enjoying the taste of Cainus’s fashion.



Cainus’s long, pointed ears went rigid with anger. “Curse that Blab Sharkey. He turned my slaves into cactuses and now there are no jackals to eat the moths. They’ve bred like ... like moths!”

But then the jackal’s eyes started to glow.

“Wait a moment,” he muttered. “Moths eat fabric. Moths eat bandages. Moths destroy mummies! Hee hee, of course. If an Animal Mummy loses its

bandages, it burns up and *dies!*”

He grinned and licked his chops, before coughing up a couple of moths.

His disguises were destroyed, but nothing could interfere with Cainus’s imagination when it came to fashion and costumes. Pushing through the moths, he gathered up armfuls of the many burnt-out candlesticks that decorated the walls of the tomb. He took his needle and thread and began sewing the candles onto a lush curtain that hung from the ceiling. The moths would have eaten the curtain, too, except Cainus spared no expense when it came to drapery. His curtains were far too thick for an insect to chew.

It was dark in the tomb, and the thick clouds of moths made it even harder to see, yet Cainus sewed as best he could.

“Soon Mumphis will be mine!” he chuckled.

After he pricked his paws for the hundredth time, he began to reconsider. “Bah, Mumphis won’t be mine!” he whined.

He glanced over to a vast stone wall covered in

hieroglyphs. This was the magic wall he used to contact the Unpharaoh's spirit in the Afterworld.

"Hmm," he said, "my mistress would know what to do. But her last plan to kill the Animal Mummies backfired ... and besides, she'll be so impressed with me once I destroy them all myself!"

Cainus worked away all day. When night fell, it was done. He stepped out of the tomb into the cool desert air. A special cape was draped around his body. It was the thick curtain from his tomb, now studded with many sewn-on candles.

"This is my greatest plan yet!" he declared. "Even greater than the time I ... actually, I can't recall any other great plans. Bah!"

Standing near the doorway, he struck two small stones together to make sparks. One by one, he lit the candles on his cape. As the candle cape glowed in the night air, the thousands of moths in the tomb flew out. They flocked to the flames. Cainus was utterly surrounded by moths. They hovered around him and flapped in his face.

Satisfied, he padded off over the sand towards

the gates of Mumphis. Wherever he went, the moths followed.

FLIPPA-FLAPPA-FLIPPA-FLAPPA!

“Hee hee *hee eh berg berg!*” Cainus laughed, occasionally breathing in a moth or two.

“Aargh! **Aargh!**” he sometimes cried as candle wax dripped onto his paws.

After a while, Cainus stood before the huge, rusted gates of Mumphis. “Well, here we go,” he muttered to himself. He took in a huge breath.

“Pfffffftttt!” He blew out the candles on his cape. With no light nearby, the moths flew up into the dark sky.

“Go in,” said Cainus, “go in there, my flapping little beauties.”

He beamed as the moths flew over the Mumphis gates. They made their way towards a dull light somewhere in the town.

Cainus chuckled with glee and scampered back to the Tomb of the Jackal to put on his magic helmet. He would watch as the Animal Mummies were nibbled to death!