

Pyramid Scheme

Sammy had never seen a camel before. She had never seen most of the things in Egypt, but the camels were what she was most excited about. When she arrived at the airport in Cairo, she was a little disappointed to see paved street, cars, and skyscrapers everywhere.

“What’s up with all these fancy buildings? Where is all the sand and camels?” she asked her Uncle Dave as they walked to his car. Uncle Dave was an archeology professor, and he was living in Egypt to do research in the pyramids.

“Cairo is a major city, Sammy” Uncle Dave said, *“it has all the modern conveniences just like in America.”*

“So there’s no camels?” Sammy asked.

“Oh don’t worry, you’ll get to ride a camel! But you’ll have to wait until tomorrow when we go to the “office”.

“Office?” Sammy asked. *“I thought we were going to a pyramid?”*

“We are, silly. The “office” is just what we call the excavation site. That’s just a little archeologist humor”, he added, chuckling to himself.

“Haha... very funny...”

The next morning they really did get to ride camels to the pyramid. Normally Uncle Dave and his team drove in a Jeep, but today he had set up a special camel ride, because he knew it would make Sammy’s day. The camel was SO tall that Sammy needed help just to get on him. The ride was a little bumpy at first, but she got used to it. She even nicknamed her camel Sandy.

“Sandy, like the desert. Very clever” Uncle Dave said. *“That’s just a little archeologist humor”*, Sammy responded, and they both had a good laugh.

When they got to the pyramid, Sammy saw several tents filled with archeologists working on laptops and other fancy equipment.

“This is my research partner, Elizabeth” Uncle Dave said, introducing a women carrying a clipboard. *“She works at the university with me. And this is her nephew Mike. He comes to visit every year. Now you kids should go into that nice big tent and hang out for a little bit. I have some work to do, but I’ll be able to take you on a tour of the pyramid in a little while,”* Uncle Dave said. *“Sounds good to me”*, Sammy replied.

As soon as they got away from the grown ups, Mike turned to Sammy and said *“How about we take a little tour of our own?”* *“I don’t think that’s a good idea”*, she said back. *“They told us to wait here in the tent. What if we get in trouble?”*

“It’s fine. I do it every year. I know every inch of this pyramid,” Mike said proudly. *“Besides, Dave and Aunt Lizzy get so caught up in their research, it’ll be hours before they check on us. We’ll be back before they even notice.”*

“I guess you’re right,” Sammy said. She had a bad feeling about it, but she also didn’t want to spend all day sitting in a tent. *“Okay, let’s go... BUT, we have to be back before anyone notices, AND if we get caught you’re taking all the blame,”* she added.

“Don’t sweat it” Mike answered. *“I’m a pro”*.

The passageways in the pyramid were narrow and dark. Sammy followed closely behind Mike. Suddenly, they heard a squeaking noise [MOISE]. *“What was that?”* Sammy asked, clinging to Mike’s arm. *“It’s just a little mouse. A few of them live in here. They’re harmless.”* Sammy sighed in relief. She started to relax, when she felt something warm rub up against her leg. Sammy latched onto Mike’s arm harder than before. *“Calm down wimp!”* Mike laughed. *“That’s just King Tut.”* Sammy looked down and saw a white cat with green eyes rubbing against her ankle and meowing [CAT]. *“He lives around here too. He’s got a great life. The researchers feed him, he has lots of mice to catch, and he has the whole desert to use as his cat box!”* Mike said. *“Gross!”* Sammy replied. The two kids continued on their adventure, and King Tut laid down and licked his paws.

As they explored, Mike pointed to this and that, telling stories of his many past adventures. There was the big stone he had tripped over last summer, the wall where he scraped his elbow once, and the place where he found a broke piece of pottery one time. These weren’t exactly the adventures Sammy hoped for, but she figured it was still better than sitting in a tent.

As they continued exploring, the passages seemed to get narrower. *Are you sure you know where we are?”* Sammy asked. *“Uhh... sure. I’ve been down this passage hundreds of times”* Mike responded, but his voice didn’t seem so confident. *“But, if you’re worried, we can head back.”*

Just as they stopped to turn around, they heard a noise, like distant footsteps [FOOTSTEP]. *“Did you hear that?”* They both whispered. *“I’m sure it’s just an echo... The sound bounces off these old stone walls,”* Mike answered, trying to be reassuring.

As they stood trying to figure out what to do, the footsteps grew louder, like they were getting closer. *“It’s nothing I’m sure...”* Mike said, trembling. *“It’s probably just the wind, or ...”* he trailed off. *“Or... a mummy!”* Sammy whispered back with fear in her eyes. With that word, both kids shot off in panic, running as fast as they could.

They whipped around corners, and ran deeper into the pyramid, but no matter how fast they ran, the footsteps only seemed to get faster and louder. They finally reached a dead end. Breathing heavily, they turned towards each other.

“If that mummy kills us in this pyramid, it’s gonna be all your fault” Sammy said, terrified. Mike looked like he was about to cry when they heard a new mysterious noise. It was a loud,

creaking sound. [CREAK SOUND] Just then the ground beneath their feet gave way and Sammy and Mike fell into the unknown space below [FALL SOUND].

They lay on the ground, coughing in a cloud of dust. It was too dark to see anything. As they lay there, catching their breath, the footstep sounds returned. They were loud and very close now. *This is it*, thought Sammy. *We've fallen right into the mummy's trap. We're goners.* Just as she braced for her inevitable demise, a light shined down onto them, cutting through the dust filled air.

"Sammy, Mike... Are you down there?" It was Uncle Dave and Lizzy. *"Yes, we're here"* they both coughed. *"Stay put, we're coming down to get you,"* Aunt Lizzy, said, as she hopped down. *"Be careful"* Mike said, *"Watch out for the mummy."*

"A mummy, what are you talking about" Uncle Dave asked after jumping down. *"There's a mummy chasing us"* Sammy affirmed. *"We were running for our lives when we fell into this room. We could hear its footstep coming for us!"*

"A mummy chasing you??" Uncle Dave asked. He would have laughed if he wasn't so angry. *"That was us, trying to find you kids! And speaking of which, what were you doing wandering off like that. I have half a mind to put you right back on the next plane home..."* His voice trailed off as his eyes adjusted to the dark. Looking around the room the kids had fallen into, Uncle Dave noticed it was filled with pots, statues, and artifacts of all kinds. The walls were covered in paintings and hieroglyphics. *"Oh my goodness. Liz, this is it. The hidden chamber we've been searching for all these years!"* Aunt Lizzy looked around amazed, *"You're right Dave. This could be the greatest discovery of our careers! Let's get the team down here right away."*

As they climbed back up into the passageway, Mike looked at Sammy. *"Sorry I convinced you to sneak off with me. It was pretty dangerous."* *"It's okay"* Sammy said back. *"At least now you have a real adventure story. It's a lot better than that stone you tripped on"*.

On the car ride back to his apartment that night, Uncle Dave couldn't stop talking about the significance of the chamber the kids had accidentally found. *"So I guess I'm off the hook for the whole sneaking off thing?"* Sammy hinted. *"Don't even think about it. You really scared me,"* he responded. *"I know, I'm really sorry"* Sammy said back. *"I know you are. Just NEVER ever do that again, okay?"* *"It's a deal,"* Sammy replied.

"I'm starving" Uncle Dave said, changing the subject. *"How about we grab dinner. There's some really great restaurants in my neighborhood. Have you ever had Egyptian food?"*

As they sat down to dinner in a nice modern restaurant, Sammy talked about her day. She had seen plenty of sand, had plenty of adventures, and even rode a camel, but right now, the "modern conveniences" of the city were just what she needed.

MOUSE, CAT, FOOTSTEPS, CREAK, FALL SOUND