

Curse of the Pharaoh

Introduction

The Valley of the Kings, Luxor, Egypt. 23 April 1894. The excavation season will soon be over, as the baking sun makes digging unbearable, but the archaeological team from Oxford University led by Sir William Saville have made a startling discovery.

Tonight, the team and their guests prepare to enjoy a slap-up dinner to celebrate the uncovering of the tomb of a previously unknown XVIth Dynasty pharaoh. But while the archaeologists make merry, dark clouds gather, internal tensions among the group burst to the surface and one of the local diggers is brutally murdered... Welcome to *Curse of the Pharaoh!*

In *Curse of the Pharaoh*, the dinner party to celebrate the tomb's discovery will be played out over the course of a single evening. As well as the five archaeologists, guests at the dig include a diplomat, a museum curator and a dilettante – plus a police officer investigating the killing. However, not everyone is as they seem. Some (well, all) of those attending have mysterious secrets and will do anything to prevent them from being revealed.

All those invited to *Curse of the Pharaoh* are given a character. As they arrive they are greeted by the Servant, and welcomed to dinner. Each character has goals and objectives that they must complete before the end of the meal. Everyone has their own goals – and not all goals are compatible. If one person achieves their goals, another may fail!

The guests have various items, such as weapons and money to help them. They may also have various abilities to help them uncover secrets and achieve their goals.

The guests can form alliances, blackmail each other, steal items and money and maybe even try to kill one another. Along the way they may solve some of *Curse of the Pharaoh's* mysteries. Who was responsible for the grisly murder? What is the secret of the Eye of Horus? How did Harry Flinders die? Who is the sinister 'Mr Big'? And what dread secret lies buried in the Pharaoh's tomb, ready to stir once more? Join us to find out in *Curse of the Pharaoh*.

Dinner Is Served!

Welcome to Curse of the Pharaoh

Thank you for taking the time to download this document. Most of the information you need to host *Curse of the Pharaoh* is contained within another set of files, for which you will have to pay. Before you do that, please check that your software is compatible by printing this section out.

What is included when you buy *Curse of the Pharaoh*?

- A step-by-step guide on how to run the game.
- Character sheets for each guest, including background, goals and objectives, rules and special abilities.
- Items and money for each guest.
- Handouts and other essential items.

How many people are needed for *Curse of the Pharaoh*?

Curse of the Pharaoh has been written for 6 to 19 guests – plus the host or coordinator. The step-by-step guide explains which characters to omit should you have fewer than 19 guests (you do need at least 6, however). Here's how that works:

Number of guests	Male characters	Female characters	Characters that can be played by either sex
6	2	2	2
7	2	2	3
8	2	3	3
9	3	3	3
10	3	3	4
11	4	4	3
12	4	4	4
13	5	5	3
14	5	5	4
15	5	5	5
16	6	6	4
17	6	6	5
18	7	7	4
19	7	7	5

Note – for more than 9 guests, you need to buy *Curse of the Pharaoh Expanded*, which includes the extra 10 characters. And if you have even more guests, we have free extra characters for *Curse of the Pharaoh* available on our website.

How does *Curse of the Pharaoh* work?

Curse of the Pharaoh runs over the course of three or four hours and is particularly suited to a buffet meal. One person is the Servant, and acts as organizer and coordinator, responsible for making sure everything runs smoothly and that all the guests have the information they need.

Your guests will be present at an archaeological dig in 19th-century Egypt. They have their own goals and agendas, and how they choose to achieve those goals is entirely up to them. *Curse of the Pharaoh* is an evening of double-dealing, intrigue, mysterious powers and even murder!

Who has taken part in *Curse of the Pharaoh* before?

Curse of the Pharaoh has been run on numerous occasions, usually with people who have no previous knowledge of murder mystery parties or events. It contains everything you need to run the game, but please don't think that you can download the game and let it run itself. The host will have to put some work to make it a real success.

Some of our customers' comments

"I thought **Curse of the Pharaoh** was perfect. Absolutely amazing. Me and my friends had the best time, with relatively no work on my part. Four months later and my friends are STILL talking about it. It let us get really creative, and yet we all saw a competitive side of our friends that we hadn't seen before."

Emma Bardes, United States

"My daughter celebrated her 18th birthday this past Saturday by inviting 13 of her friends to join her in enacting the **Curse of the Pharaoh Expanded**. It was a great success! Each participant dressed their part and kept in (frequently very amusing) character. We were initially a bit intimidated by the apparent complexity, as it was going to be played by a group of 16, 17 and 18 year olds. But from the introductions onward everyone remained engaged for three and a half hours. Thank you for creating such an intricate, engaging, exciting game. The flexibility adds challenge, but it is well worth the effort navigating its twists and turns. I recommend your games as a great activity for teenagers."

Lynn Robb, United States

"We played **Curse of the Pharaoh** for my husband's 29th B-day last night. It was awesome!! It was actually a surprise party for him, and when he came in, our living room / dining room was transformed into a Middle Eastern tent (I hung Indian sarees on the walls and from the ceiling, had Egyptian art on the walls and was playing Middle Eastern music). We were all in costume when we yelled "Surprise!" He was so excited! I gave him the role of the detective and about half an hour to change and read his character sheet. Everyone had an amazing time! I served olives, samosas and a Mediterranean mix of appetizers as the guests familiarized themselves with the rules and had a rice, chicken and beef kebabs with flatbread for dinner when the game started. I went to the dollar store and bought real items for each of the characters' item cards and made a scarecrow with a crimson sash to lay outside the room as the murder victim. We sooo can't wait to play another game over the Christmas Holidays!!"

Alcina Prezens, Canada

"What a great time for all! They are still talking about **Curse of the Pharaoh**. Thank you and I would definitely recommend this one to someone else. They created alliances and wanted to swap abilities and team up against each other. What a hoot! Thanks again."

Rhonda Dinsmoor

Curse of the Pharaoh

You are cordially invited to *Curse of the Pharaoh*, an evening of double-dealing, intrigue, mysterious powers and murder to be held at

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on starting at

Setting

The Valley of the Kings, Luxor, Egypt. 23 April 1894. The excavation season will soon be over, as the baking sun makes digging unbearable, but the archaeological team from Oxford University led by Sir William Saville have made a startling discovery.

Tonight, the team and their guests prepare to enjoy a slap-up dinner to celebrate the uncovering of the tomb of a previously unknown XVIth Dynasty pharaoh. But while the archaeologists make merry, dark clouds gather, internal tensions among the group burst to the surface and one of the local diggers is brutally murdered... Welcome to *Curse of the Pharaoh!*

Your Character

Your character, the person you will be playing, is indicated below. You will receive more background information, your character's detailed goals, simple rules and a heap of cool abilities and items on the day.

The Cast

Sir William Saville: renowned archaeologist and leader of the dig

Ariadne Price-Evans: veteran translator of Egyptian inscriptions

Hugh Carlaw: enthusiastic young student

Helen Mackinnon: the belle of Oxford

Shahfeez Merouf: mysterious Arab, the Curator of the Luxor Museum

Alvy Spanheim: Cultural Attaché at the German Consulate

Eva de Chalons: dilettante and art connoisseur

Lindsay Wilde: also wild by nature, a brooding misfit on the archaeological scene

Robert Tregarne: Detective Sergeant in the Colonial Police

Alex McQueen: Detective Constable in the Colonial Police

Armand Lenoir: leader of a French excavation nearby

Marie-Claire Guiscard: hard-working assistant to Lenoir

Tariq al-Mansoor: wealthy collector of Egyptian antiquities

Fatima al-Mansoor: wealthy collector of Egyptian antiquities

Professor Reginald Mathers: respected archaeologist from Cambridge

Lady Jane Fortescue: noble widow and archaeological dilettante

Chris Kovacs: young Hungarian student

Reverend Godfrey Fox: Cambridge-based church minister

Angela Fox: administrative assistant to Mathers's team

THE CAIRO GAZETTE

23rd April 1894

The main English-language newspaper of the Egyptian colony

Oxford Team Strikes It Lucky

The archaeological team led by Sir William Saville, which has been digging in Luxor's Valley of the Kings since September last, has hit the jackpot with the exposure of a fine XVIIIth-Dynasty tomb doorway in apparently undisturbed ground. Who knows what may lie beyond? 'This could be the answer to all our dreams – a fully intact pharaonic tomb!' exclaimed Sir William, his eyes gleaming with that passion we all know and respect.

The site will hold particular poignancy for the team's esteemed leader, as it is just a mile from where he first made his professional name as a rising young archaeological star, in 1870, with the discovery of the Eye of Horus, the striking malachite plaque recently stolen from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Sir William's partner on that dig was the talented Harry Flinders, tragically stuck down by scorpion bite that same day – how great a loss to archaeology he may have been, we shall never know. 'I dedicate this new find to Harry's memory,' said Sir William, wiping away a tear.

Assisting Sir William on the excavation are noted lady archaeologist Miss Ariadne Price-Evans, and students Mr Hugh Carlaw and Miss Helen Mackinnon.

War More Likely In Colonies Than Europe, Says PM

The Prime Minister spoke to calm the nerves of Parliament, after the recent flood of ill-informed gossip about the proximity of European War. 'Her Majesty's Government is fully aware that our bellicose neighbours are arming themselves more capably and in greater numbers than we have seen for generations. A newly-united Germany keen to prove itself on the world stage, and a France desperate for a last chance at greatness, represent real dangers, and in response we too have commenced a military build-up.

'But the people of Britain need have no fear. If there is war, it will be a war of Empire, and will be fought in the far-flung provinces and colonies, not here in our homes. And, it need hardly be added, Britain will be victorious!'

(Shouts of 'Huzzah!' from all sides of the House.)

Superstitious Natives Restless

The *Gazette* notes with concern that relations between the native Egyptian community and their British superiors has taken an alarming trend for the worse in recent months. It seems the local folk are no longer willing to meekly kowtow to the policies we institute on their behalf.

Rather than attempt to secure an interview with a native Egyptian, from which little of value could likely be learned, we spoke to renowned expert on native affairs Major Ray Siste.

'Your Egyptian Johnny's a peaceable enough fellow six days out of seven. But prod him in a sensitive spot, and he'll be hopping up and down with rage as quick as Jack-be-nimble! And one thing he can't abide is the idea that his precious artefacts are being smuggled out of the country! Seems he don't mind so much if they're going to museums or universities – it's the private collectors he can't abide. Something to do with ritual significance of the items concerned, or some such stuff and nonsense – he's a superstitious chap, your basic Egyptian in the bazaar. Forever worrying about ancient evils being raised from the tomb by careless Westerners, and such. Why, it fair makes us old Egypt hands laugh, to hear the natives wail about tampering with knowledge man was not meant to wot of. What I say is, if man weren't meant to wot of it, why was he given the wherewithal to wot with, what?'

It is certainly true that the theft of artefacts from archaeological excavations in the Luxor area has been sharply on the rise lately, under the nefarious influence of a smuggling ring led by a shadowy figure known only as 'Mr Big'. It is not only the natives who are irked by this gentleman's antics!

Another theory is that the Egyptian political-intellectual class is wary of their land being used as a pawn in the rivalries of European nations. Understandably perhaps, they have no desire to see bloody battle waged on the banks of the Nile, over an affair which is no quarrel of theirs. However reasonable this belief may at first sound, though, the clear fact is that Egypt is far better off under British rule than German or French. (The 'independence' some are calling for is not even worth discussing.) So any sacrifices the Egyptians are called upon to make for the defence of British power will be well worthwhile. And we may be assured that any further attempts by rabble-rousers to foment peasant unrest will be met with firmness by the colonial authorities!

An Introduction to Curse of the Pharaoh

Forget who, when and where you are – and join a team of archaeologists in the Valley of the Kings for an evening of double-dealing, intrigue, mysterious powers and even murder!

In *Curse of the Pharaoh* you and the other guests will take on the roles of nine characters at an archaeological dig in Egypt. You might be an archaeologist yourself, a politico, or a dilettante. Or maybe you will be the investigating police officer! You will be provided with background details for your character explaining who they are and why they are at the dig. You will also be given information on other players and goals for you to achieve.

How do I play?

Playing *Curse of the Pharaoh* is a little like starring in your own movie – although how your movie ends depends entirely on you and the other guests. There is no predetermined script – how you decide to tackle your goals is entirely up to you.

The most important skill in *Curse of the Pharaoh* is the ability to hold a conversation. You will need to talk to the other players to find out who they are and whether they will help or oppose you. Some of the characters you may know a little about already, but some will be unknown to you.

Information is the key to achieving your objectives in *Curse of the Pharaoh*, so you should aim to talk to everyone. You may need to reveal information known only to you in order to get information from another player, of course.

You will also have a number of abilities that give you an advantage against other characters in certain situations. The other players also have abilities that they may use against you!

Rules and the Servant

Curse of the Pharaoh has a few simple rules, but the Servant (the host) usually oversees these. The Servant is neutral, and is there to ensure that *Curse of the Pharaoh* runs smoothly and that everyone has a good time. If you have any questions about *Curse of the Pharaoh*, you should first consult the Servant.

And Finally...

Have fun!

Playing *Curse of the Pharaoh*

If you've not played a Freeform Games murder mystery game before, you might not be familiar with how they are played. Our murder mystery games are different from other murder mystery games – so you might want to review these guidelines first.

Curse of the Pharaoh is completely interactive. You decide who to talk to and when. You also decide what you will tell them, and whether you tell them the truth or not. Of course, that goes for everyone else in the game as well...

In *Curse of the Pharaoh* you will pretend to be someone else (your character) in a fictional setting (the archaeologists' camp in the Valley of the Kings). You will meet and interact with other characters and everyone will be trying to achieve their own goals. We don't provide a script – it's all up to you.

Here are several tips to help you enjoy *Curse of the Pharaoh*:

- **Three basic attributes:** Playing this game requires just three basic skills – a sense of fun, an ability to strike up a conversation with another person, and the willingness to pretend to be someone else for an evening. If you can do that, you should have no trouble!
- **Dress the part:** You will receive information, including costume tips, about your character beforehand. A good costume can help you get into the spirit of the game, and also means that you will be in lots of photographs.
- **Read your character sheet:** Your character sheet explains who you are, who you know and what your objectives are. However, your character sheet describes what your character *believes*, but that might not necessarily be true! Keep your character sheet handy as you may need to refer to it during the evening.
- **Your Goals:** Your goals describe what your character is trying to achieve during *Curse of the Pharaoh*. You should attempt every goal – although you may not achieve them all (as other characters may oppose you).
- **Read your character sheet again:** This time, think about your goals. You should also take note of other characters - you will probably need to speak to them sooner rather than later.
- **Introduce yourself:** Once the game starts, you will need to talk to people while pretending to be your character. The easiest way is to introduce yourself to someone as your character. If you don't know anything about them you can ask who they are and why they are here. If you do know something already (from your character sheet, for example) then you can ask about that.
- **Tips for beginners:** We provide tips for people who haven't played our games before. These give you a couple of ideas of things you should do at the start of the game. The tips are optional, but they may help you get started.
- **Find your friends and enemies:** In *Curse of the Pharaoh* some people will help you, and some will oppose you. It's important to find both – although to get your friends to help you, you may have to help them in return.
- **Ability cards:** You will have special ability cards that you can use to help achieve your goals. The cards are self-explanatory and generally have a limited number of uses. You may need to think carefully about who you want to play them on.
- **The Host:** Ideally, you shouldn't need the host (the Servant) to achieve your goals – most can be achieved by talking and negotiating with the other characters. You should consult the Servant if you have a question about the rules, but you certainly shouldn't ask for help in solving your goals as they are up to you!
- **Act the part:** Don't start talking about football or movies or anything else that isn't part of *Curse of the Pharaoh*. It's more fun if everyone tries to maintain the illusion that you're all in the 1890s.
- **Read your character sheet yet again:** If you find yourself at a loose end, find a quiet place and re-read your character sheet. You may find that there's someone you haven't spoken to yet, or something you need to do.
- **Finally:** Remember that the most important thing to remember is to have a good time!

Costuming for *Curse of the Pharaoh*

These tips are suggestions only - you should wear whatever you find comfortable. However, photographs usually come out better when you're wearing a costume!

Although the game takes place at a dinner, preparations have been rather disrupted by the murder, so the archaeologist characters might be wearing 'work' clothes rather than evening dress.

Sir William Saville: 'professor' clothes – tweed jacket, maybe a pipe. Or evening dress.

Ariadne Price-Evans: a long dress or blouse and long skirt, with a high collar and long sleeves.
Hair could be scraped back into a severe bun.

Hugh Carlaw: 'archaeologist' clothes, khaki, pith helmet – maybe shorts and knobby knees!
Or evening dress.

Helen Mackinnon: a delightful frock, preferably with a high neck – the 'English Rose' look.
Ideally, with a straw hat.

Shahfeez Merouf: elaborate Middle Eastern robes, with a head-dress.

Alvy Spanheim: dress as formally as possible, with a top hat if male.
Maybe a monocle, to look more Germanic.

Eva de Chalons: glamorous evening dress with plunging neckline, gloves, cigarette holder...
the works!

Lindsay Wilde: dress as described for Hugh or Helen, depending on gender.

Robert Tregarne: police uniform if available, if not then everyday clothes with a sturdy jacket.

Alex McQueen: dress as described for Robert

Armand Lenoir: dress as described for William, but with added French stylishness

Marie-Claire Guiscard: practical outdoor clothes, with lots of pockets

Tariq al-Mansoor: dress as described for Shahfeez

Fatima al-Mansoor: covered from head to toe, with just eyes showing

Professor Reginald Mathers: dress as described for William

Lady Jane Fortescue: a glamorous dress as if for a garden-party

Chris Kovacs: shabby but hard-wearing outdoor clothes

Reverend Godfrey Fox: clerical dress, with a dog-collar

Angela Fox: dress as described for Helen

The Servant: either in smart white uniform, or in Egyptian clothes such as a djellabah (long plain tunic with sleeves)

THANK YOU for getting this far. Now please buy the game!

Curse of the Pharaoh is available from anywhere in the world for £20.00 (for the main game) or £25.00 (for *Curse of the Pharaoh Expanded*). We also sell the *Curse of the Pharaoh Expansion Pack*, consisting of just the extra ten characters, separately for £10.00. As soon as we receive notice of your payment, we will notify you of the passwords and location of the main pdf files, which will enable you to download the game.

To buy online with a credit or debit card:

you can do this at http://www.freeformgames.com/buy_games_worldpay.php

The system is secure and provided by WorldPay.

To buy online by PayPal:

you can also do this at http://www.freeformgames.com/buy_games_worldpay.php

Just click on the PayPal button for this game that you see there.

To order by post:

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We're sorry, but we can only accept payment by post in the form of cheques or International Money Orders made out in UK pounds.

Our Terms and Conditions: By ordering our games you agree to comply with our terms and conditions. The full text is at <http://www.freeformgames.com/terms.html>, but here is a summary:

- You buy a licence to run our game – you may run it as many times as you like.
- You are not permitted to re-sell the game on (the license only covers use – not resale).
- You are not permitted to use our games commercially – ie. to charge people to take part in the game or spectate upon it, or to use the game as part of a package for which you charge people. (If you want to use the game commercially, we do have commercial licences available to purchase: please get in touch with us.)
- The game is copyright Freeform Games LLP. Our contract is governed by English law.

Our Guarantee: No product is perfect for everyone. We know that and you know that – and that's why we offer a cast-iron, no quibble guarantee. If you're not completely satisfied with *Curse of the Pharaoh*, let us know within 30 days and we will refund you.

Disclaimer: The game comes "as is". We are unable to enter into any conversations regarding the best way to make it work. Any disputes arising from the sale of *Curse of the Pharaoh* are subject to the laws of England and Wales, regardless of the location of the customer. This game is for adults and more mature teenagers. Plot lines are not suitable for younger children. Common sense is required to play this game.

We sell **games** – they're meant to be fun. Our games sometimes include rules allowing characters to stab, poison or shoot each other. We provide safe rules covering such acts and do not suggest or condone the use of real implements when the games are played. You are responsible for running the game – if you, or any of your players, choose not to use the rules we provide, you have sole responsibility for the consequences that may follow.