Chapter 1
I saw the Great Pyramid and got thirsty. Maybe it was all the sand. So dry and yellow, it seemed to stretch on forever. It even made the sky look dry. I joked my mum in the side. "Mum, I'm really thirsty."
"Not now," she said. She had one hand up on her forehead, shielding her eyes from the bright sun as she stared up at the enormous pyramid. Not now? What does not now mean? I was thirsty. Now!

Someone bumped into me and apologised in a foreign language. I never dreamed that when I saw the Great Pyramid, there'd be so many other tourists. I guess half the people in the world decided to spend their Christmas holiday in Egypt this year.

I decided to try my dad. As usual, he was studying the handful of guidebooks he always carried everywhere. "Dad, I'm really thirsty," I said, whispering as if my throat was strained to get my message across.
"Wow. Do you know how wide the pyramid is?" he asked, staring at a picture of the pyramid in his book.

"I'm thirsty, Dad."
"It's thirteen acres wide Gabe. Do you know what it is made of?" he said really excited.
"Some kind of stone?" I answered.
"That's right! It's made of limestone. Limestone blocks. It says here that some of the blocks weigh up to a thousand tons."
"Dad, I really need a drink."
"It gives me a funny feeling to think that our ancestors, yours and mine Gabe, may have walked around these pyramids, or even helped to build them. It gives me a kind of chill."

We're Egyptian you see. I mean, both sets of my grandparents came from Egypt. They moved to the United States around 1930. My mum and dad were both born in Michigan. We were all very excited to see the country our ancestors came from.

"I wonder if your Uncle Ben is down inside that pyramid right now," Dad said, shielding his eyes from the sun with one hand.
Uncle Ben Hassad, I had nearly forgotten about my uncle, the famous archaeologist. Uncle Ben was another one of the reasons we had decided to come to Egypt. That and the fact that my mum and dad had some business to do in Cairo and Alexandria and some other places. They have their own business. They sell refrigeration equipment. It usually isn't very exciting, but sometimes they travel to cool places, like Egypt, and I get to go with them.

I turned my eyes to the pyramids and thought about my uncle. Uncle Ben and his workers were digging around the Great Pyramid, exploring and discovering new mummies, I guess. He had lived in Egypt for many years and was an expert on pyramids and mummies.

"Dad, do you think Uncle Ben can take us inside the pyramid?" I asked enthusiastically. "That would be really outstanding."

"No, I don't think so. I don't think it's allowed," Dad said.

I couldn't hide my disappointment. But little did I know that in a few days, Mum and Dad would be gone, and I would be deep inside the pyramid we were staring at. Not just inside it, but trapped inside it, sealed inside it—probably forever.

Chapter 2

We drove back to Cairo in the funny little rented car Dad had picked up at the airport. An hour or so later, we were back in Cairo with its narrow, crowded streets. I didn't get a drink until we got back to the hotel. We had a suite, with two bedrooms and a living room. There was a TV, but everyone spoke Arabic on it. We had just started to talk about where to go for dinner when the phone rang. Dad went into the bedroom to answer it and then he called Mum in, and I could hear the two of them discussing something. They both came out a few minutes later.

"Your dad and I have to go to Alexandria. An important customer wants to meet us first thing in the morning and we have to take a plane that leaves in an hour. I talked to Uncle Ben and he said that he'd come and keep an eye on you while we are away?"
This was starting to sound outstanding. Uncle Ben is one of the coolest guys I've ever known.

"It's your choice though Gabe. You can come with us, or you can stay with Ben until we get back!"

"I'll stay with Uncle Ben!" I declared.

"Ok. Sari is also on her Christmas holidays. And she's staying with him too."

Sari is Uncle Ben's stuck up daughter. My only cousin. She's the same age as me, twelve, and she thinks she is so great. She goes to boarding school in the United States while her dad works in Egypt. They disappeared into the bedroom to pack, while I watched some game show in Arabic. After a while, Mum and Dad came out with their suitcases.

"I've talked to Ben. He'll be here in an hour, hour and a half. Gabe, you don't mind staying alone here for just an hour, do you?"

"No problem. I'll be fine. I'll just watch TV until he comes."

"Ben and Sari will be here soon. And I phoned the hotel manager. He said that he'd have someone look in on
you for time to time. Don’t go out or anything. Just wait here for him.” She bent down and kissed me on the forehead. Mum and Dad looked worried, gave me hugs and more final instructions. The door closed behind them and it was suddenly quiet.

I turned up the TV to make it a little noisier.

“I am not scared,” I said aloud. But I had kind of a tight feeling in my throat. I picked up my coke glass and took a sip. My stomach growled. I suddenly realised that I was hungry.

I went to look in the fridge and remembered it was empty. Room service, I thought. Then I decided I’d better not.

What if I called them and they only spoke Arabic? I glanced at the clock. Seven twenty. I wished Uncle Ben would arrive. I wasn’t scared. Okay, maybe a little nervous.

I paced back and forth for a bit. Where were they? What was taking so long? I began to have horrible, frightening thoughts. What if they can’t find the hotel? What if they get mixed up and go to the wrong hotel? I glanced down and realised I had taken the mummy hand out of my jeans pocket. It was small, the size of a child’s hand. A hand wrapped in brown gauze.

I had bought it a few years ago and I always carried it around like a good luck charm. I tossed it from hand to hand as I paced the length of the living room. The TV was starting to make me feel nervous, so I turned it off. But now the quiet was making me feel nervous. I slapped the mummy hand against my palm and kept pacing. Where were they? They should have been here by now. I was beginning to think I made the wrong choice. I should have gone with Mum and Dad.

Then I heard a noise. Footsteps. Was it them? I stopped in the middle of the hallway, but I saw the doorknob turn. That’s strange, I thought. Uncle Ben would knock first—wouldn’t he?

“Hey—” I called out, but the word choked in my throat. Uncle Ben would knock. He wouldn’t just barge in. Slowly, slowly, the door squeaked open as I stared, frozen in the middle of the room, unable to call out.

Standing in the doorway was a tall, shadowy figure. I gasped as the figure lurched into the room, and I saw it clearly. Even in the dim light, I could see what it was.

A mummy.

Glaring at me with round, dark eyes through holes of ancient, thick bandages. A mummy. Pushing itself off the wall and staggering stiffly towards me into the living room, its arms outstretched as if to grab me.

I opened my mouth to scream, but no sound came out.