



# TOMB ROBBERS

Stolen  
Treasures



by Ruth Owen

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by Ruth Owen

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# Searching for a Tomb

It was a hot night in the Egyptian desert more than 3,100 years ago. On the west bank of the Nile River, across from the city of Thebes (THEEBZ), eight men were hard at work. They were using copper tools to dig a tunnel through the stone **tomb** of the ancient Egyptian king **Pharaoh** Sobekemsaf (soh-buh-KEM-suhf). Finally, the rock in front of the men cracked and fell away, leaving a dark hole.



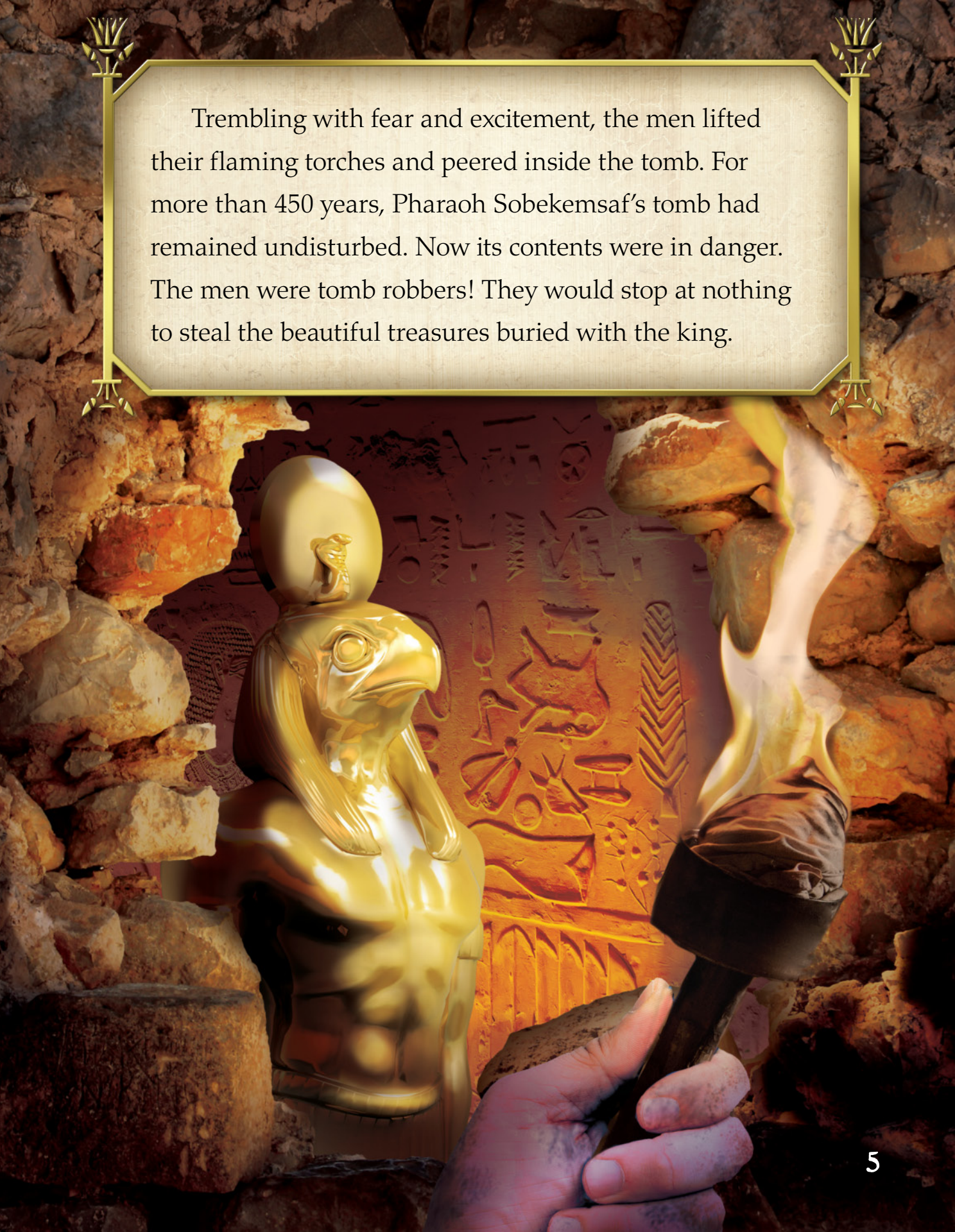
The Valley of the Kings was one place that ancient Egyptians buried their pharaohs.



The desert on the west bank of the Nile River was known as the land of the dead. That's because people saw the sun set, or die, in the west each night. The ancient Egyptians buried their dead in this area.




Trembling with fear and excitement, the men lifted their flaming torches and peered inside the tomb. For more than 450 years, Pharaoh Sobekemsaf's tomb had remained undisturbed. Now its contents were in danger. The men were tomb robbers! They would stop at nothing to steal the beautiful treasures buried with the king.





# Robbers!

One of the tomb robbers was a young **stonemason** named Amenpanufer (AH-men-pa-nuh-fur). He and his **accomplices** stepped into the tomb and found two large stone coffins called **sarcophagi**. The men strained to push aside the heavy lid of one sarcophagus. Inside was the pharaoh's incredible wooden coffin, decorated with gold, silver, and jewels. Amenpanufer and the other robbers opened the coffin's lid. The king's **mummy** was inside!

A large, rectangular stone sarcophagus with a lid. The lid is slightly raised, revealing the interior. The stone is reddish-brown and shows signs of weathering and age. The front of the sarcophagus has a decorative pattern of vertical lines and rectangular panels. The background is a dark, textured green.

An ancient Egyptian  
stone sarcophagus



The mummy was covered with more shiny gold and dazzling jewels. The greedy robbers tore at the mummy, pulling off its precious jewelry. Then the thieves opened the other sarcophagus and wooden coffin. Inside was the pharaoh's queen. The thieves stole the jewels from her mummy, too.

The men hurriedly gathered every valuable item they could carry. Then, to cover their tracks, they set fire to the royal coffins and escaped into the night.

On that night, Amenpanufer and the other thieves stole 32 pounds (14.5 kg) of gold from Sobekemsaf's tomb!



A pharaoh might have been buried wearing a solid gold collar like this one.

