

# Curse of the Sunken City: The Abydos Dagger

## Scenario

Deep in the Egyptian desert, an international team of archaeologists is on the brink of a legendary discovery at the recently unearthed Sunken City of Heracleion. Excitement peaks with the find of "The Abydos Dagger," a priceless pharaonic treasure. But the celebration is cut short when Professor Alistair Finch, the expedition's brilliant but arrogant leader, is found murdered in his tent – stabbed with the ancient dagger itself. With a sandstorm cutting them off from the world, the trapped team members must uncover the killer among them before ancient curses or modern motives claim another victim.

### Your Character: Ben Carter (Ambitious Junior Archaeologist)



- **Background:** You are a young and ambitious archaeologist. You really want to become famous in your field. You often tried to impress Professor Finch.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Professor Finch was your mentor. You hoped he would give you a good recommendation for future jobs.
- **Your Alibi:** You say you were working late in Trench 3. You hoped to find something interesting that Finch would notice.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** Professor Finch recently found out that you were secretly giving information about the dig to a rival university. You hoped they would offer you a job. Finch was very angry and threatened to ruin your career.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Late last night, you saw Dr. Lena Hanson walking *towards* Professor Finch's tent. She looked very angry. This was strange because she later said she was in the records tent.

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### Your Character: Chloe Davis (Photography Intern & Finch's Niece)



- **Background:** You are a young photography intern. You got this internship because Professor Finch is your uncle. At first, you admired him a lot.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Professor Finch was your uncle. You were here to take photos of the finds and the excavation work.
- **Your Alibi:** You were in the communal (shared) tent. You felt a bit unwell, so you went to bed early.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** You recently discovered that your uncle Finch had a secret lover at the dig site (you think it might be Clara Moreau, the new intern). You were very disappointed in him because he often told others to be professional. This motive is not strong for murder, but it shows you were unhappy with him.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Earlier on the day of the murder, you overheard Professor Finch arguing with Dr. Evelyn Hayes. Finch sounded like he was dismissing her ideas, and Dr. Hayes sounded very upset. Dr. Hayes mentioned something about "career sabotage."

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### **Your Character: Clara Moreau** (Graduate Student Intern - Anthropology)



- **Background:** You are the newest member of the team, a graduate student studying the cultural impact of archaeological discoveries. You are quiet and tend to observe others.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** It was rumored that you were having a secret romantic relationship with Professor Finch. He had promised to help your career.
- **Your Alibi:** You claim you were in your tent, reading. You say you felt a bit intimidated by all the senior staff.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** Professor Finch suddenly ended your relationship after the Abydos Dagger was found. He told you that you were a "distraction" and that your help was no longer needed on the dig. You felt hurt and used.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** On the night of the murder, you saw Omar Sharif. He was standing some distance away, but he was looking very intently at Professor Finch's tent for a long time. This was much later than he claimed he was with his workers at their camp.

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### Your Character: Dr. Evelyn Hayes (Epigrapher - Ancient Text Specialist)



- **Background:** You are quiet and observant. You are an expert in ancient languages and know a lot about the old curses related to Egyptian tombs.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** You were a professional colleague of Professor Finch. He often ignored your ideas about the site, especially if they were about curses or less "scientific" things.
- **Your Alibi:** You were in your tent. You were translating some old writings found earlier. You say the talk of a "curse" made you too nervous to sleep.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** Professor Finch was planning to publish an article that said your life's work on Heracleion texts was wrong and "fanciful nonsense." This would have been very bad for your reputation.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Hours before Finch died, you heard him on a satellite phone. He was arguing very loudly with someone about "broken promises" and "stolen artifacts." You could not hear who he was talking to, but they sounded very angry.



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### Your Character: Dr. Ivan Volkov (Rival Archaeologist)



- **Background:** You are the head of an archaeological team from a different university. Your team lost the chance to excavate this site to Professor Finch. You are known to be bitter and very competitive with Finch.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Professor Finch was your academic arch-rival. You have argued publicly for years.
- **Your Alibi:** You claim you were at your own, less important dig site, which is miles away. No one can confirm this. You "arrived" at Finch's camp very early this morning. You say you heard about the dagger discovery on the radio and came to "congratulate" Finch (but really, you wanted to see what he found).
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** If you could humiliate Finch or show his discovery was not important, it would be very good for your career. Maybe you tried to steal the dagger or his research notes.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** You have a fresh scratch on your cheek. You say you got it from a thorny bush at your dig site. When you "arrived" this morning, you "found" a small, torn piece of expensive-looking dark fabric near Professor Finch's tent. It looks like it could be from a jacket like the one Marcus Thorne often wears.

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### Your Character: Dr. Jian Li (Ambitious Junior Archaeologist)



- **Background:** You are a young and ambitious archaeologist. You really want to become famous in your field. You often tried to impress Professor Finch.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Professor Finch was your mentor. You hoped he would give you a good recommendation for future jobs.
- **Your Alibi:** You say you were working late in Trench 3. You hoped to find something interesting that Finch would notice.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** Professor Finch recently found out that you were secretly giving information about the dig to a rival university. You hoped they would offer you a job. Finch was very angry and threatened to ruin your career.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Late last night, you saw Dr. Lena Hanson walking *towards* Professor Finch's tent. She looked very angry. This was strange because she later said she was in the records tent.

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### Your Character: Layla Hassan (Documentary Filmmaker)



- **Background:** You are a young and ambitious archaeologist. You really want to become famous in your field. You often tried to impress Professor Finch.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Professor Finch was your mentor. You hoped he would give you a good recommendation for future jobs.
- **Your Alibi:** You say you were working late in Trench 3. You hoped to find something interesting that Finch would notice.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** Professor Finch recently found out that you were secretly giving information about the dig to a rival university. You hoped they would offer you a job. Finch was very angry and threatened to ruin your career.
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## Your Character: Marcus Thorne (Wealthy Private Investor)



- **Background:** You are the main financial backer for this expedition. You are a rich businessman and you also collect artifacts. Some people say your collection has items that were acquired in questionable ways.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** You were Professor Finch's business associate. Finch promised you "first pick" of some types of artifacts found, which is not entirely ethical.
- **Your Alibi:** You claim you were on a satellite phone call with your business partners in London. After the call, you went to bed early.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** After the team found the Abydos Dagger, Finch tried to change your agreement. He wanted a much larger share of any future profits and might have tried to stop you from getting certain artifacts you wanted for your collection.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** You saw Professor Finch and Yousef Al-Noury (the Antiquities Guard) having a very quiet but tense conversation near where the dagger was found. This was earlier in the evening. They looked like they were arguing about something physical, maybe the dagger itself.



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### Your Character: Omar Sharif (Local Foreman & Antiquities Expert)



- **Background:** You are an experienced local foreman. You have a deep connection to this area and its history. The local workers respect you very much.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** You worked with Professor Finch on many digs. You often disagreed with him about respecting local customs and how to handle artifacts carefully.
- **Your Alibi:** You were with your workers at their camp. You were making sure the site was secure after the valuable Abydos Dagger was found.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** You suspected Professor Finch was secretly smuggling smaller artifacts from the site to sell for his own profit. The Abydos Dagger was too famous to steal, but if Finch's other illegal activities were discovered, it would be a big scandal.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Very late last night, you saw someone sneaking around the supply tent. This tent is where tools and some less valuable artifacts are stored. It was dark, but the person moved quickly and seemed to know the area well. They might have been trying to hide something or take something.

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### Your Character: Samira "Sam" Rossi (Geophysicist / Tech Specialist)



- **Background:** Responsible for ground-penetrating radar and other tech. Practical and no-nonsense.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Colleague; Finch relied on her tech but often ignored her interpretations if they didn't fit his theories.
- **Your Alibi:** Was calibrating equipment in the tech tent.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** Finch blamed a recent equipment malfunction (which wasn't Sam's fault) for a delay in the excavation, threatening her reputation.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Noticed that the camp's main generator sputtered and cut out for a few minutes around the likely time of the murder. This could have provided a window of darkness/cover. Layla mentioned going to the generator – perhaps she saw more than she's letting on or her timing is off.

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### Your Character: Yousef Al-Noury (Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities Guard)



- **Background:** You are an official from the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities. Your job is to make sure all artifacts are documented correctly and kept safe. You are very strict and follow the rules.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** You were responsible for overseeing Professor Finch's work. You often disagreed with him about following protocols and site security.
- **Your Alibi:** You were patrolling (walking around to guard) the main excavation area. This was your duty, especially after the valuable dagger was found.
- **Your Motive (or strong reason to be a suspect):** You strongly suspected Professor Finch was planning to smuggle the Abydos Dagger out of Egypt. His death means the dagger will now definitely stay in Egypt under the Ministry's control.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** Earlier in the evening, you told Professor Finch that the security for the dagger was not good enough. He became very defensive. Later, around the suspected time of the murder, you saw Marcus Thorne pacing nervously outside his own tent. He kept looking towards Finch's tent.

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### Your Character: Dr. Lena Hanson (Lead Archaeologist)



- **Background:** You are Professor Finch's second-in-command. You are a brilliant and careful archaeologist. However, Professor Finch often overshadowed you and took credit for your hard work. You did most of the research that led to this current discovery.
- **Relationship to the Victim:** Finch was your mentor, but he became your rival. Years ago, he stole your research, which damaged your early career. You felt he was about to do it again with the Abydos Dagger.
- **Your Alibi:** You claim you were in the records tent late last night, cataloging small items found yesterday.
- **Your Motive (Publicly known or suspected by some):** Many people know Finch often treated you badly and stole your ideas. You were clearly frustrated with him.
- **Key Information/Clue You Possess:** You know that Finch was having serious financial arguments with Marcus Thorne, the expedition's investor. You overheard Thorne threatening to pull all funding if Finch didn't agree to his terms regarding the new finds.



## Secret Information (Dr. Lena Hanson)

- **You are the killer.**
- **How and Why:** Last night, Finch told you he was going to publish the discovery of the Abydos Dagger with only his name on it. He also said he would not renew your contract. The Abydos Dagger was *your* discovery, based on *your* theory that Finch first laughed at. You went to his tent and argued fiercely with him. During the argument, he became angry and grabbed a geological hammer from his desk to threaten you. In fear and rage, you grabbed the Abydos Dagger (which was also on his desk) and stabbed him.
- **The Cover-Up:** You panicked. You wiped your fingerprints from the dagger and left it in him. You slipped out of his tent. You did go to the records tent for a short time, much later than you will claim, to try to create an alibi.
- **Instructions:** You must lie about killing Professor Finch. You can be truthful about other details on your sheet (like Finch's bad behavior or your past problems with him) unless they directly show you are the murderer. Your goal is to make others suspect someone else and to avoid being caught.