

# SECRET AGENT MUMMY

Meet the CRAZIEST  
crime-fighter ever!



**STEVE COLE**

creator of **Astrosaurus**

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## About the Book

BRAVE, BOLD . . . AND BANDAGED!

What could be crazier than a 2000-year-old EGYPTIAN MUMMY DETECTIVE moving in next door?

How about:

an army of brainwashed baboons?

a flying bandaged dog's bottom?

a talking cat goddess?

an evil sorceror from another world?

Somehow Niall Rivers has got to deal with ALL OF THEM.

Still, it's not the end of the world . . .

IS IT?

# SECRET AGENT MUMMY



**STEVE COLE**

Illustrated by Donough O'Malley

**RHCP DIGITAL**



For Tobey and Amy

# Chapter One

## A Whiff of Weirdness

The house on the hill was so spooky, even ghosts would think twice about visiting after dark. It was big and old. Its jagged roof looked like teeth biting the sky.



Niall Rivers had never come here before, and hoped he never would again. His mum had been driving around the neighbourhood collecting bric-a-brac for the school fête on Sunday, and the owner of this house had about a hundred tons of junk to give away.

While Mum sorted through billions of boxes in the dark, dusty hall, and the owner stood around watching and smiling, Niall's nostrils quivered from the pong of the place. It smelled like the monkey house at the zoo, with a bit of backed-up toilet thrown in for luck.



"Uh, I think I'll wait outside," Niall murmured.

"Very wise," said the owner from a shadowy corner of the hall, his voice hoarse with age. "There's quite a view. You might be surprised by what you can see."

Niall didn't answer, but made his way outside and took some deep breaths. "Maybe I'll spot a couple of orang-utans using the bathroom. That would explain the niff!" He smiled to himself and glanced up at a dirty window.



For a moment he thought he saw red eyes glaring back at him, but they were gone in a blink.

What was up there? Frowning, Niall went to get a better look.

As he did so, he saw a man duck out of sight behind a tree a short way down the hill. *Looks a bit shifty*, he thought. Unfortunately for the man, the tree was so thin it could hardly hide a squirrel, let alone a human being. Niall could see the man's grey raincoat flapping, and the wide brim of his hat sticking out on either side of the trunk.

"Ah. Um . . . Hello, there." The man stuck his head out from behind the tree and smiled at Niall. His eyes were hidden by a pair of dark glasses. "I am just giving this tree its annual checkup." The man spoke carefully, as if English were not his first language. "You know, checking it for . . . um, leaves."





*Weirdo*, thought Niall. “Er, right. Well, the owner is just in the house here. Shall I—?”

“No!” said the weirdo quickly. “I have to go. I have got a whole lot of other trees to inspect.” He pulled out a notebook, looked at the house, scribbled something down, and hurried away - straight into another tree. “*Ooof!* Er . . . yes. Like this one. ‘Hard trunk’,” he noted. Then, with a quick wave at Niall, he staggered off down the driveway.

Niall shrugged and turned back to the house, just as the front door burst open. Mum appeared, struggling with a couple of large cardboard boxes.

“Niall, quick, open the car boot,” she gasped. “These weigh a ton.”

He did as she asked, but as Mum tried to squash the boxes in, something fell to the ground. It was a strange-looking model, carved from wood.

“What’s that?” Niall stooped to pick up the little wooden figure. It had the body of a man, and the head of a baboon or something. *I knew that house smelled like monkeys*, he thought . . .

But as Niall’s fingers closed around the figure -



It felt as if a herd of nuclear elephants were trumpeting behind his eyes. Amazing colours blazed through his brain . . .

Then the feeling faded. Niall stood up, staring dumbly at the figure clutched tightly in his hand.

“Hmm, looks a bit Egyptian.” Mum plucked the carving from his fingers - but nothing seemed to happen to her.

“Might get fifty pence for it.”

She chucked it in a box and slammed the boot shut.

“Right, that was my last call today. I need to collect Ellie from dance class.”



Niall rubbed his tingling eyes. "Uh . . . right."

Mum frowned as she opened the driver's door. "What, no fuss? No moans about having to run around after your little sister? Sure you're OK, Niall?"

"I do feel a bit weird," he admitted as he got into the car. "Maybe the stink in there turned my head funny."

"Shhh!" Mum glanced at the front door, but it had already swung shut. "The owner might be whiffy, but he was very generous. He insisted I take everything."

"Saves him taking it down the dump, I guess." Niall smiled. "Hey, could we take Ellie down the dump once we've picked her up?"

"That's my son back," Mum sighed, starting the car. "Behave yourself, Niall Rivers . . ."

Niall grinned. "Maybe one day!"

They drove away down the hillside. Niall's head was still spinning when he caught sight of the weirdo in the raincoat behind another tree. He seemed to be peering at the old house through a funny telescope shaped like a long triangle. As the car trundled past, the man ducked down into a bush, then yelped as he realized it was full of thorns.

"Must be a gardener," Mum remarked.

"Or an escaped looper," Niall muttered, as he noted something odd. How could he not have noticed that before?

The looper must have bumped into an awful lot of trees since waving goodbye. His face was *covered* in

bandages . . .



## **Chapter Two**

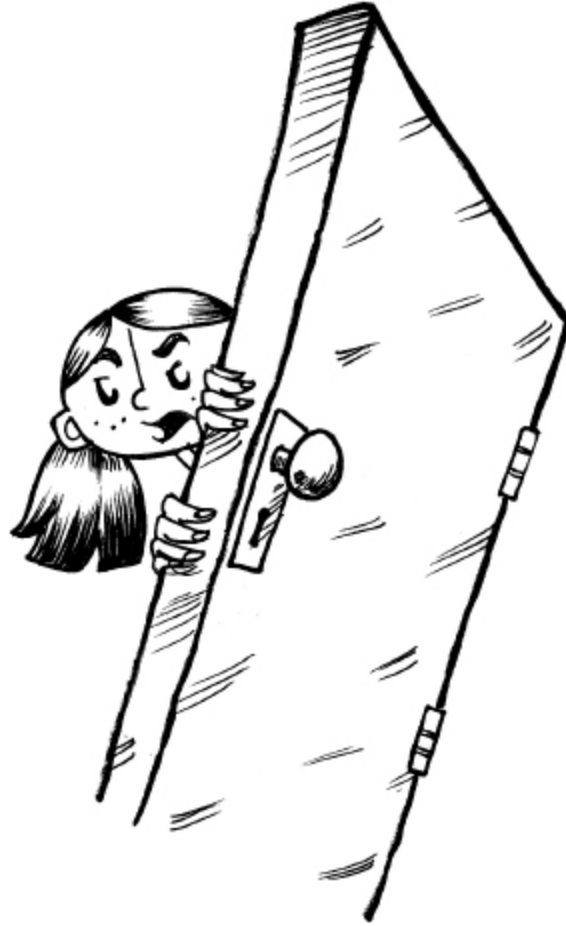
### **The Pyramid Next Door**

That evening passed quickly for Niall. He kept busy making an Ellie-the-Snitch Detector.

Niall loved playing with technology – fiddling with gadgets and inventing new ones. His dumb little sister often tried to spy on him, and Niall was determined to stop her. He sat on his bed trying to connect the motion-sensor from an old toy to the buzzer from an alarm clock. If anyone came near his bedroom door, the buzzer would warn him. That was the idea, anyway.

After hours of fiddling, Niall felt he was finally getting somewhere, when his door suddenly burst open.

“Hey!” He dived forward to hide his project, and accidentally squashed it with his tum. “Ow!”



“Niall?” The Snitch glared at him suspiciously from the doorway. “What are you up to?”

He smiled. “Plotting your doom.”

“That’s mean,” said the Snitch coolly. “I’m telling Mummy.”

“What a surprise,” said Niall as she trotted away, blonde bunches bouncing. Ellie had made it her mission in life to get him into trouble whenever possible.

“Niall,” Mum called wearily a few seconds later, “don’t be mean to your sister.”

“Fine!” Niall yelled back. He got up, slammed the door shut, and stared crossly at his broken gadget. But his eyes felt hot and prickly. He realized he felt stupidly tired. It was all he could do to stagger back to his bed and lie down.