

Geronimo Stilton

Thea Stilton **AND THE BLUE SCARAB HUNT**



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IN FLIGHT WITH MARIA

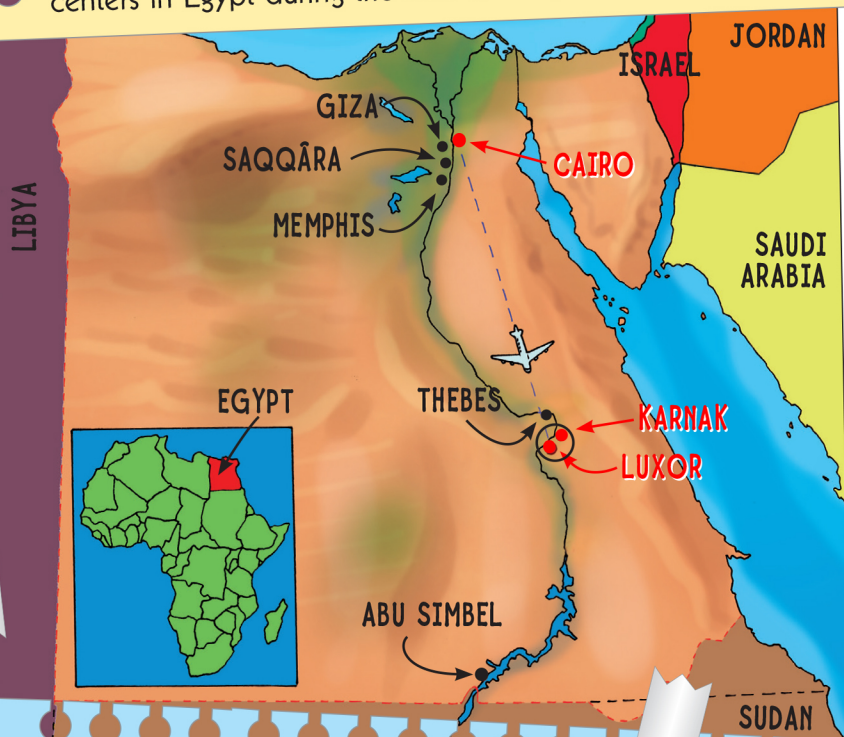
I love to **TRAVEL** around the world! My name is Thea Stilton, and I'm a **SPECIAL** correspondent for *The Rodent's Gazette*, the newspaper run by my brother, Geronimo. The absolute best part of my job is getting to **SEE** new places! I've traveled practically everywhere on the planet, from Azerbaijan to Zimbabwe.

But today was a little different from most days. I was traveling for a truly **SPECIAL** occasion. I was on board a direct flight to **Egypt**, and



LUXOR

Luxor (al-Uqsur) is the modern name for the ancient city of Thebes, which was one of the most important religious centers in Egypt during the time of the pharaohs.



THEBES

Thebes was the capital of Egypt for many centuries. The Egyptian name was Waset, which means "the powerful." The name Thebes is Greek.

Today the only remaining parts of ancient Thebes on the right (east) bank of the Nile are the temples of Karnak and Luxor. The Valley of the Queens and the Valley of the Kings stretch along the left (west) bank. That's where the tombs of many pharaohs have been found.



seated next to me was a sweet little eight-year-old **mouselet** from **PERU!**

If she looks familiar, that's probably because you've met her before. It's Maria, Paulina's little sister!* We were going to Luxor together to join **PAULINA** and the other Thea Sisters.

I'm sure you know all about the **THEA SISTERS**. A little while back, I was invited to teach a class in adventure journalism at my old school, **MOUSEFORD ACADEMY**. **Colette**, **nicky**, **PAMELA**, **PAULINA**, and **Violet** — the Thea Sisters — were in my class. Without a doubt, they are the five brightest young rodents I've ever met!

Now, I'm sure you're wondering why I had to meet them in Luxor, and why I was traveling there with **Maria**. Well, you see, the Thea Sisters had made an extraordinary

* We met Maria during the Thea Sisters' adventure in Peru. You can read about it in my book *Thea Stilton and the Secret City*.

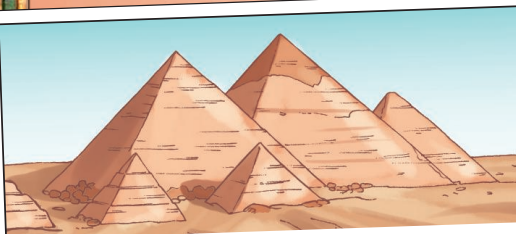
THE FASCINATING WORLD

EGYPTOLOGY

Around 3000 BC, one of the world's richest and most fascinating civilizations — Egypt — began developing along the banks of the Nile River. Egyptology is the study of the language, history, and culture of this grand civilization.

EXTRAORDINARY MONUMENTS

The ancient Egyptians created some truly amazing monuments: the pyramids; the Great Sphinx in Giza; the temples of Karnak, Luxor, and Abu Simbel; the tombs of the pharaohs in the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens . . . The list goes on and on. To this day, we still aren't sure how the ancient Egyptians were able to build these massive structures with the limited tools available at the time.



THE PYRAMIDS OF KHUFU, KHAFRE,
AND MENKAURE IN GIZA



ONE OF THE TWO TEMPLES
OF ABU SIMBEL

OF ANCIENT EGYPT

BURIED WONDERS

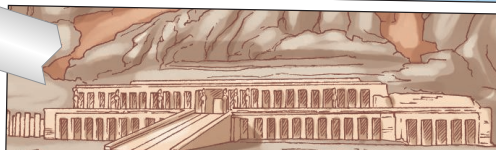
No one knows how many other treasures await discovery in Egypt. Many works of art and valuable artifacts are still hidden beneath the desert sands. Unearthing them is a difficult and delicate process. Only archaeological experts can do it without the risk of harming these artifacts forever.

ANCIENT ANTITHEFT DEVICES

Throughout history, archaeological discoveries have attracted treasure hunters. Even in the time of the pharaohs, thieves sneaked into the monuments to steal the valuables kept there. For this reason, many speculate about the measures taken to protect the entrances to the most important ancient monuments.



THE GREAT SPHINX IN GIZA



THE TEMPLE OF
HATSHEPSUT



archaeological discovery during a trip to Egypt. I offered to write an article about the **exhibition** dedicated to their find. As for Maria, she was to be the guest of honor. Why? Keep reading and you'll soon find out!

I couldn't wait to listen to Colette, Pamela, Paulina, Violet, and Nicky tell me all about their latest **adventure**. Right now, I only had the headline — that the five mouselets had saved an ancient treasure from a band of **TOMB RAIDERS**! I was as eager for the full story as a bookmouse waiting for the final installment of *Ratty Potter*. I'll bet you are, too!

A story this fascinating was destined to become the subject of a good **BOOK** — a book that I had already decided to call *The Blue Scarab Hunt*!



THE GREATEST TREASURE IN EGYPT!

Our story begins many months earlier, at **MOUSEFORD ACADEMY**. It was a chilly, gray winter day, and the history professor, Bartholomew Sparkle, was holding a **SPECIAL** class devoted to his upcoming **expedition** to Egypt.



Bartholomew Sparkle



“I have been invited by a **FAMOUSE** Egyptologist,* Professor Marcus Mouserson, to join his team of archaeologists!” Professor Sparkle told his students **solemnly**.

“Will you be there for a long time, Professor?” asked Paulina. She was very **interested** in ancient civilizations.

“I asked for a year off,” the professor replied. “It’s a great opportunity! I’m going to participate in an archaeological **dig** near the ancient city of Thebes. That’s where Professor Mouserson is leading a group of **scholars** who are trying to bring the famous **TREASURE OF THE SUN** to **LIGHT**.”

The professor turned on his trusty slide projector. An image of an ancient pyramid appeared on the screen. “You see, mouselets, since **PREHISTORIC** times, mousekind has witnessed the continuous alternation of day

* An *Egyptologist* is a scholar who studies the civilization of ancient Egypt.

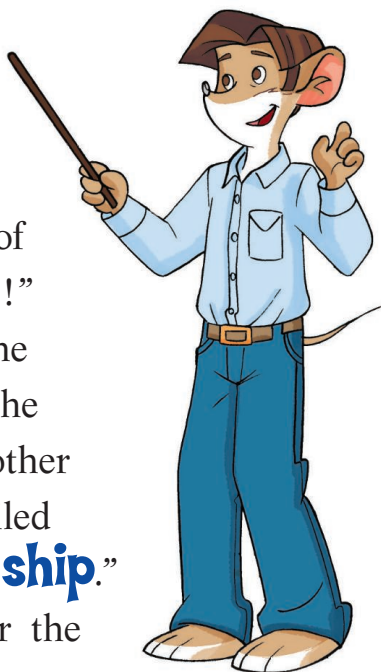


and night. By that I mean that day always follows night, with the rising and the setting of the **SUN**. But ancient rodents weren't able to explain this phenomenon **scientifically**, so they explained it in their own way."

From the back row came the squeak of Marcos Papatopos, a Greek student who had just entered the academy. "The ancient Greeks believed that the sun was a god, Helios, who **DROVE** a chariot of **FIRE** pulled by horses!"

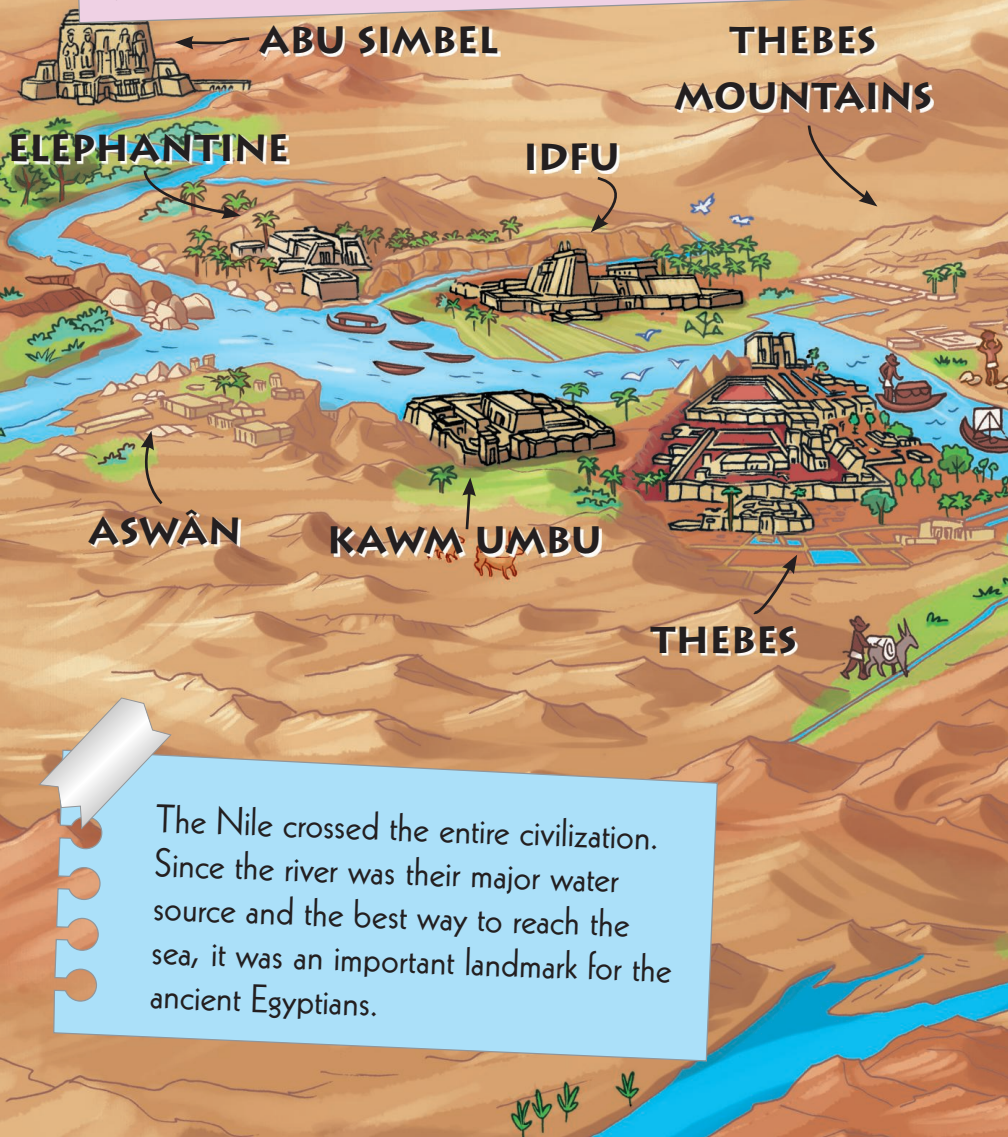
"Exactly!" confirmed the professor, **delighted**. "The ancient Egyptians, on the other paw, believed the sun sailed through the sky on board a **ship**."

"Was the sun a god for the



THE NILE VALLEY

In the time of the pharaohs, Egyptian civilization spread across the green valley surrounding the Nile River, which was bordered by the desert on both sides. People lived in the valley because the river made the soil fertile.



The Nile crossed the entire civilization. Since the river was their major water source and the best way to reach the sea, it was an important landmark for the ancient Egyptians.

ABYDOS



GIZA



SAGQARA

MEMPHIS

HELIOPOLIS

TANIS





Egyptians, too?” Pamela asked.

“Yes, Pam! The most important **god!**” Professor Sparkle replied. “So **IMPORTANT** that it was given a different name for every phase of the day. The god Khepri took the form of a **scarab**, or beetle, and represented the **rising** sun.”

“A scarab?! Gross!” Pamela **shivered**, **wrinkling** her nose. “Insects creep me out!”

“**Shhh!**” Violet hissed. She was so fascinated by the professor’s lecture she didn’t want to miss a squeak.

“The god Ra was the **sun** during the day, when it was bright and warm, while the god Atum-Ra was the sun at **sunset**,” Professor Sparkle continued. “There’s a legend about a pharaoh who built





a **beautiful** temple to the sun gods. The ruins have never been discovered, but Professor Mouserson is convinced that the temple is out there. And he wants to be the one to unearth it!”

“Is that temple related to the **TREASURE OF THE SUN?**” asked Colette.

Professor Sparkle **nodded**. “Yes it is. Some papyruses say that the Treasure of the Sun, which was an offering to the god Ra,

PHARAOHS

The name *pharaoh* comes from the Egyptian *per 'aa*, which means “great house” or “palace.” Over time, the word came to be used as the title of the king. The pharaoh had absolute power over his subjects and was worshiped as a god. One of the most important and famous pharaohs was Ramses II.



RAMSES II



was hidden in a **SECRET** place within the temple, but no one knows where. It is believed that the treasure is a vessel made of gold and filled with **precious** objects. It's supposed to be the greatest treasure in all of Egypt!"

“**OOOOOOOOOOOOOH!**” the students sighed. They were enthralled by Professor Sparkle’s tale.

“It’s like something out of *Mousiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Rodent’s Snout*,” sighed Pam.

“So you’re going to search for the treasure, Professor? **Wow!**” said Nicky, impressed.

The professor **smiled**, and his eyes shined with **EXCITEMENT**. “That’s right! I’m on the hunt for a treasure of enormous value. If we find it, it will reveal new secrets about the great Egyptian civilization!”