

The Mummy Shower Game

It started out as a harmless enough game, just something to pass the time in the shower. I don't know why but when I was young, just taking a shower did not seem amusing enough. So, I came up with a diversion that was the typical product of a ten-year-old mind. Unfortunately, I was sixteen at the time. I don't know if it's because I was immature for my age, or because I had an overactive imagination, or because I had watched too many old horror movies. All I knew was I could no longer enjoy singing and showering at the same time.

The rules were simple. The Mummy started out on the other side of the world from me. Yes, *that* Mummy- the once dead monster dug up from some ancient crypt, bandaged from head-to-toe, with a bad arm, a bandaged eye, and a bum leg. He drug his bad leg behind him as his good eye searched for someone to strangle with his good arm. In the game, any time that I started singing in the shower, the Mummy would start moving towards me. When I stopped, he stopped. If I started again, so would he.

Why the Mummy? Why not Frankenstein, or Dracula, or the Wolf Man? I don't know; I guess it is because the Mummy seemed particularly mindless, almost robotic. He seemed like just the kind of guy who would live for nothing but to strangle me, to travel half the globe without so much as a coffee break to get me ASAP.

Funny, but at sixteen it never occurred to me that a half-dead horror monster dragging himself through the streets of modern cities might draw the attention of local authorities. I mean, wouldn't any self-respecting law enforcement officer, upon seeing a 3,000-year-old man with a countenance that bespoke evil intent, at least detain him for questioning? When I conceived the game, it also didn't occur to me that there was only one way for the thing to end- my gruesome demise. Why consider it? It was only pretending after all. . . wasn't it?

Oh sure, the game was fun for a while. It would take the Mummy quite some time at his rate of speed to reach me, unless, of course, he used public transportation. Not fair. But who's to say a monster would play fair?

After some days I became increasingly uneasy whenever the lyrical urge hit me in the shower. Soon multi-verse songs were limited to a single verse, then to short choruses. I began to wonder, "Where is that dude anyway?" Maybe he's aboard a double-decker bus in downtown London. Maybe he's booking passage on a vessel crossing the Atlantic. Maybe he's covering a stretch of I-35 that will lead him to my door!

I reached the point where I couldn't take it. My nerves wouldn't allow me to sing, so I stopped altogether. Now and then I would catch myself humming unconsciously and quit abruptly. Have you ever tried to rinse the shampoo out of your hair with your eyes open? I half-expected the Mummy at any moment to rip back the shower curtain and attack my wet, naked body. I tried to back out of the game. "I quit!" I said out loud, hoping that the Mummy was listening. "It's not fun anymore!" A person's got the right to sing in the shower if they want to without worrying about some dumb monster choking them, right?

I called a truce, hoping the Mummy in my mind would honor it. I couldn't be sure. Years have come and gone since then and I am still here. I sing in the shower again, but even at age 48, a shiver will run down my spine sometimes when I'm in the middle of one of my favorite songs. Is that my imagination, or did I hear something? Thump, drag. Thump, drag.