

THE PLAYERS

Murdoch: a bony old archaeologist, pretentious, quick to anger, kind of power-hungry

Dana: a young undergraduate student, Murdoch's assistant, stereotyped as a slacker

Ankhesenamun: ancient Egyptian mummy, treated as an object by Murdoch, unable to speak, uses pronounced/defined body language, constantly in pain and sorrow

THEIR GAME:

Scene 1

The depths of an old American university. Early to mid 20th century. Night.

MURDOCH, an old archaeologist, looms over the lifeless body of ANKHESENAMUN, an ancient Egyptian mummy. He narrates to his student assistant, DANA, who is taking notes off to the side.

MURDOCH

Body is in fine condition, only superficial damage consistent with the report from Alexandria. Appears to be a high ranking servant, by the looks of it. Are you getting this down, Dana?

DANA

(Flipping through pages of notes) Yeah, name's Ankhesenamun, came over from Alexandria, good condition, high-ranking servant, yeah the whole shebang.

MURDOCH

Must you talk like that?

DANA

Sorry Murdo- *(Murdoch glares at Dana)* Apologies, Doctor Anderson.

MURDOCH

(Shakes their head) Well, let's get on with this. *(Grabs jewelry necklace on Ankh's neck)* Would you look at that! Dana, could you find the scissors, I want to get this necklace off.

DANA

Sure. *(Walks over to the supply/tool box. Looks through it for a beat, and then turns around)* Can't find 'em.

MURDOCH

What? It's definitely in there, did you even bother looking?

DANA

Uh, yeah?

MURDOCH

(Stops examining the mummy and stomps over to Dana.) It has to be in there, I know where I put it.

DANA

Hey, uh, Dr. Anderson, I was wanting to ask you something.

MURDOCH

No.

DANA

Hey, what gives!? You didn't even hear what I was gonna ask!

MURDOCH

I know what you were going to ask, and no, it isn't going to happen Dana.

DANA

Come on! I'm not even getting *course credit* for staying up late and looking at guys and gals that've been dead for thousands of years! Plus, it'd be nice to get paid maybe-

MURDOCH

(Stops looking for the scissors, stomps back to the mummy and tears the necklace off. As he speaks, he steps toward Dana, and places the necklace in their hands) No, Dana, you are not going to be paid. I may consider academic credit, but as it stands right now your performance is so so. Isn't it good enough to get the experience and your name in my paper?

DANA

I mean... it is nice to get the experience, I just, I-

As Dana speaks, Ankhesenamun begins to move, first with her eyes then her arms and legs. She sits up and Dana stops talking, eyes wide.

MURDOCH

Well, Dana, spit it out.

Dana feebly points, but before they can say anything Ankh screams.

MURDOCH

(Turning around to face Ankh) Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!

The two are frozen in shock, as Ankhesenamun jumps off the examination table. She shrieks when her legs hit the floor. Murdoch and Dana recoil, while Ankh walks off stage right, making painful noises with every step.

MURDOCH

What on earth was that... is this a prank? Is it Yale again? How could Dr. Stevens do that...

DANA

YALE? Murdoch... Sorry, Dr. Anderson... That was the ancient, thousands of years old corpse we were just examining earlier, just... Getting up and WALKING AROUND.

MURDOCH

...And?

DANA

Do you seriously think Yale could do something like that?

MURDOCH

No, I guess not... They've pranked me plenty, but nothing quite... like that.

DANA

An honest to God walking mummy...

MURDOCH

A walking mummy that we're going to get back in here and finish examining! Come on, it went out the hallway door, it can't have gotten far!

Dana shrugs at what Murdoch is saying. The two run off stage right.

Scene 2

Ankhesenamun enters stage left. Her movements are slow, and she winces with every step. She looks around fearfully.

DANA

(From offstage) Murdoch, slow down!

She jumps in surprise and lets out a small scream.

MURDOCH

(From offstage) What was that? Over here, Dana, follow the noise!

*Ankh panics and hides in the shadows, where Murdoch and Dana can't see her.
Murdoch and Dana enter stage left.*

MURDOCH

I'm sure I heard something...

DANA

You're hearing things old man. Besides, we literally just came in through the autopsy room's back door!

MURDOCH

That is no way to talk to your mentor, Dana.

As Murdoch and Dana talk, Ankh can be seen listening in, but the two of them don't notice her.

DANA

Say, speaking of which... Have you thought any more about giving me some academic credit for this? I figured what with all the corpse chasing I-

MURDOCH

No, Dana. You were a slacker in class, a slacker in the lab, and a slacker now. You're wasting precious time chatting me up about credit instead of helping me find this thing!

DANA

Ugh, sorry Dr. Anderson.

MURDOCH

So, without further ado, where could our little mummy have gone?

DANA

What'd they do in The Mummy?

MURDOCH

The... Mummy? You mean, the Boris Karloff picture?

DANA

Yeah, they had to hunt down a mummy in that, figure it's as good a place as any to look for help.

MURDOCH

(Pinches the bridge of his nose) Dana... that is a monster movie, it isn't real.

DANA

So now we're sticking to what's "real" or not when there's a corpse just walking around?

MURDOCH

This thing is not the villain in one of your little movies, it doesn't have a curse in stow or an evil scheme up its sleeve, it's just a mindless automaton of skin and bone. Sorry to say it, but Dracula, Wolfman, and Abbott and Costello aren't about to hop in here and help us out!

As Murdoch discusses the mummy, Ankh can be seen wincing and trembling. Their fear increases over the course of the scene.

DANA

Jeeze, Murdoch, you don't gotta be-

MURDOCH

Refer to me properly, Dana.

DANA

Would you shut up! I am sick and tired of you constantly putting me down! I have been your student for three years now, I thought you picked me as your assistant because you liked my work in your classes, but it sure feels like you hired me just so you could get away with underpaying one of your students! Honestly, it's a miracle this Ankh girl came back to life, finally gave me a reason to be here.

MURDOCH

Did you have anything to do with this?

DANA

What? How the hell am I, of all people, going to bring a mummy back from the dead?

MURDOCH

I don't know, you seem pretty damn vindictive right now! I wouldn't put it past you to take a bit of inspiration from Karloff.

DANA

Jesus Christ, Murdoch! Do you even hear yourself?

MURDOCH

I just want that wrinkled numbskull back on the slab so we can look inside her before Yale or anybody else can beat us to it!

DANA

Now why's that?

MURDOCH

This would be the greatest discovery of a generation, Dana!

DANA

Whatever man.

MURDOCH

This is more serious than your childish movies! To be the first archaeologist to identify an ambulatory mummy... the benefits outweigh all the displeasures of chasing the thing around with you!

Dana rolls their eyes.

MURDOCH

This little lady is the ticket to my place in history! Little more than a mindless object, yes, but one that moves about despite all evidence to full death! I must have it, I must reach into every part of it and find out its most hidden secrets, for the good of American science!

DANA

Sure.

MURDOCH

Your lack of enthusiasm does nothing to dampen my attentiveness. Let's go, the thing isn't here.

DANA

Not like I have anything better to do.

Murdoch marches off stage left. Dana goes to follow but hears a noise from Ankh's hiding place. They turn around, as Ankh panics and tries to crawl out without being noticed. Once out, she turns and sees Dana, her eyes fearful.

DANA

M-Murdoch... *(Shouting to offstage)* Murdoch!

MURDOCH

(From offstage) Yes, Dana?

Before Dana can reply, they glance back at Ankh and notice how afraid she is.

DANA

Shoot, uh... here, hide. *(They quickly find Ankh a new hiding place before Murdoch can get back)* I'm so sorry...

MURDOCH

(Comes back on stage) Dana, why did you call for me?

DANA

I, uh, thought I saw something.

MURDOCH

We already inspected this room! Jesus, Dana, quit wasting our time! We have got to find this thing.

Murdoch turns to go back offstage, but Ankhesenamun shifts, revealing her hiding place.

MURDOCH

Oh you sure saw something Dana! Looks like we found what we were after. Help me get her on the table.

DANA

(Rushes to be between Murdoch and Ankh) No, Murdoch! I'm sorry but we... we can't mess with this thing anymore. She's in pain Murdoch, she's afraid.

MURDOCH

She?? Do you hear yourself right now? You are talking about a piece of dried meat dragged out of the desert, not one of your classmates.

As the two of them argue, Ankh steps forward, closer to Dana.

DANA

She's a poor creature, I doubt she even knows why she came back, I mean just look at her!

MURDOCH

Oh I'll look at her alright... *(Murdoch lunges for Ankhesenamun, causing her to jump back)*

DANA

Jesus, Murdoch!

MURDOCH

What? Do you seriously hear yourself right now Dana? This isn't one of your monster movies, this is a serious scientific study!

He punctuates his statement by reaching for Ankh, forcing her further away, almost cowering against the wall.

DANA

(Dashes between Murdoch and Ankh) Stop it, Murdoch! Please just listen to me for once!

MURDOCH

(Pushes Dana out of the way, making Dana fall to the ground) No, Dana. Now is not the time for your jokes and your annoying interjections. Now is the time for real archaeology! Get here! *(He reaches for Ankh, she runs away from him, clutching at her neck)*

DANA
Ankh, you gotta get out of here!

MURDOCH
Shut up, Dana!

DANA
(Getting to their feet) Wait... look at where her hands are.

MURDOCH
What? Stop distracting me.

DANA
Her neck... *(Reaches into their pocket and pulls out the necklace)* Her neck!

Dana rushes toward Ankhesenamun, getting between her and Murdoch. They press the necklace onto her neck, allowing Ankh to hold it there with her own hands. After a beat, Ankhesenamun collapses to the ground.

DANA
(Kneels down to look closer at Ankh) Rest in peace buddy...

MURDOCH
Goddammit, Dana, you took my biggest discovery! The thing's dead now!

DANA
Yeah, and she doesn't have to live in fear anymore!

MURDOCH
Well, whatever... with the supernatural problem out of the way, we can get back to our examination.

DANA
Oh, no we aren't. I'm sending her back.

MURDOCH

What? You can't do that Dana, I am your superio-

DANA

Just pipe down and help me, we're putting her back on the ship to Alexandria.

Without saying a word, Murdoch walks over to Dana and together they pick up the lifeless body of Ankhesenamun, taking her offstage.

THE END