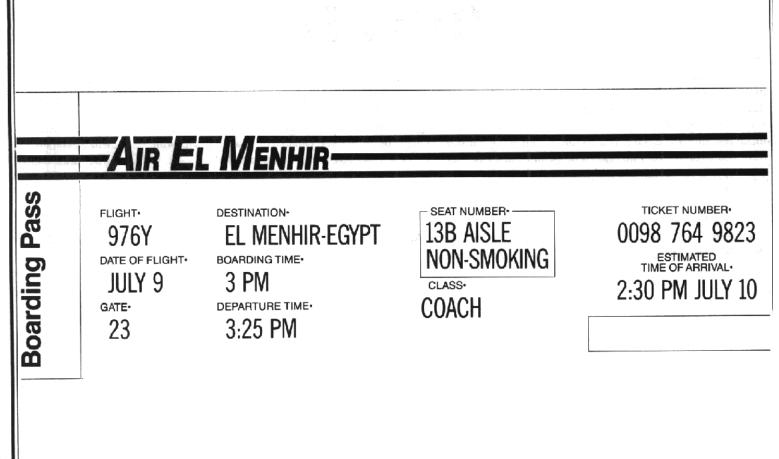
## Infidel

## Preface to the Story

You like to think of yourself as a bold and adventurous soldier of fortune, dating to brave the perils of the Egyptian Desert in search of a great lost pyramid. In fact, you're a small-time explorer, and you've just been marooned by your crew. Thoughts of getting lost, starving to death, or dying of thirst cross your mind, but you are sustained by the faint hope that you can somehow find the pyramid in this smoldering heat. You're all alone. Perhaps the sun has affected your thinking. Do you really expect to find a lost pyramid in this vast, endless desert, much less survive? Even if you do find it, can you get inside? Hardest of all, are you capable of matching wits with the ancient Egyptians? Still, you're driven onward against desperate odds. Undreamed-of riches and treasures beyond imagination await you. And your pride and dignity, your reputation and self-esteem, are at stake. For you are branded INFIDEL.

## About the Author

Michael Berlyn is a writer whose books include The Integrated Man and Crystal Phoenix from Bantam Books. He is the author of SUSPENDED, INFIDEL, and CUTTHROATS, all from Infocom.



July 8 I think I'm on to something big. Leally big. This is the chance I've been waiting for, the chance to prove to everyone that I'm not just someone's errand boy. after the way Craige treated me on that sidiculous Safari, I developed a distaste for him. Everyone jumped when he spoke - the great white hunter, puffed up and dressed the part. I know everything he knew about running a Safari and he still treated me like dirt. Even his client, Joshua Ranking thought Craige was someone really special, someone who had seen everything, been everywhere, was always in control of every situations.

The wayhe always barked orders got to me after a while. "Help the Bearers strike the tents," he'd say, or, "Check the supplies." God, how I learned to despise him. I played it smart, though. I knew better than to confront him, to let him know & saw right through him. I bided my time, vaited till we were back in the States, then formulated a simple plan. It was risky, and I had no idea what Craige would do it he caught me at it, but I was just as good as him, and all I needed was the break to prove it. Well that break came this morning, when a Miss Ellingsworth called . Craige was but of the office, so I ahowered the phone. I told a little lie

when I told her who I was. She wanted someone with a lot of experience to find something out in the desert, and I told her I was Craige's partner, and I had all the experience for the job: When she asked for Craige, who was ont Checking on some new equipment, I told her he was on sofari, and it was one or no one.

over to talk to her. The was a gray haired spinster type, about 65 or so, living in an old, pretty run-down place. This is the stry she told me:

of the century. Somehow he got his hande on an ancient

artifact, a pottery shard more than 5000 years old inscribed with strange hieroglyphs. From what he deciphered, the shard pointed to the general location of a pyramid, a pyramid which no one had ever heard of before. He kept as quiet about his discovery as possible and, after four years of bowing, scraping, and petitioning foundations and universities, managed to flind a small expedition in 1920, the took his wife and newborn daughter along for the trip. after a few months of disheartening searching, he Came across something which proved he was on the right track - a small block of limestone inscribed with those same odd hieroglyphs. When he decoded it he discovered it referred to vast riches and a queen.

that as far as he got though. The desert heat and the local water got to him and he died there. His widow and child returned to the lates and when Tuta tomb was discovered a few years later, Miss Ellingmorth's mother figured they'd dug up her dead husbands pyramid. She stowed all his records and belongings in a steamer chest and forgot about the whole thing. and there it rested for sixty years intil the mother died. Miss Elling worth went through the Stuff in the attic and found the limestone cube, a map, a partial hieroglyphic dictionary, and a rubbing of the cube. From what she could tell, the

pyramid was nowhere near lutis, so she called Craige to see what could be done. It Just think of the historical significance of such a discovery," Miss Ellingworth said to me, handing over her father's things. Sure, it was a cinch I looked the pieces over. With the map, the task seemed eary. I could practically see the pyramid in my mind. all the glory would be mine not Craige's! Wis was a Chance to show the world what a fool Craige was, a chance to prove that I was better than him. There would be enough gold and Treasures in the peramid to set me up for life but, more importantly, it would give me the reputation I deserved but had been denied by the glory- grabbing Craige.

along. I've saved money, sold the condo and just about everything I had that was worth anything, waiting patiently for the right opportunity. Now it's here and I realize I'm under-capitalized. Miss Ellingoworth has no money - all she really wants out of this is to make her bad into someone famous - so its all up to me. Le packed my bage and got my visa today. Tomorrow & take off for Egypt. I won't bother giving We leave for the pyramid site to morrow at day break. I'm in El Menhir, a muddy

little village on the Nile. I've managed to keep my purpose here a secret—I told the locals I was a scientist interested in making smar soundings in the desert. But I did confide in Abdul, the top quide in the area. He'll be the go-between for me and the locals he lined up to do the work. He also rounded up all the supplies we need—tents, K-rations, cooking utensils, and the like.

It's been one disaster after another, but more of it is really my fault! First, we hardly get into the real desert area when the navigation box falls off the back of the jeep. Great! I had to radio back to Cairo

for a replacement and they said they d get it to me, an-drop it into the encampment, in a few days another expense in an already tight expedition \$\$\$ Then the dates Abdul bought turned out to be mustering, and one of them had the nerve to demand more more I promised everyone a big bonus if all went well. think they trust me, and I don't know how much longer I can keep them digging, and still stay in Control. I don't remember Craige ever having these problems. And this kind of thing sure never hoppened to the heroes in "True Tales of Adventure."

AUGUST 6 We've been at the site for three weeks and the new manigation box still hasn't arrived. I figured it would be best to keep the men busy—"idle hande and all that—aigging in the general area indicated on the map. Without that box, though, it's like looking fra needle on a haystack. on them. abdul came to me and said I had better do some thing or there'd be trouble I laughed at abdul, telling him that I was in control, that nothing was going to happen that I didn't want to happen. Abdul said "what about the box? Did you want it to break?" I slepped him across the face! Abdul said nothing, but he glared at me. I think I might have handled him better.

AVGUST 8 THE BOX STILL ISN'T HERE! Without it I don't think I'll be able to hold things together much longer. Our food Stores are pretty low. The men are grumbling more and more. They stop working unless I stand over them and watch. One of them simply refuses to work at all, and Abdul is no real help. He seems to take their side. NO DON! Radioed Cairo yesterday and the day before They assure me it's on the way of Et is, then where is it. abdul led the men into the desert to perform some religious ceremony, but I didn't believe it was a holy day, all I could think was that the whole thing was getting out of control. That I was loving the only real chance I ever had. That if I didn't get them back to digging, it would be all over.

I marched out into the desert to confront Abdul. I asked him to stop this foolishness and get back to work. about broked very offended! I pushed him, demanding he order the men to work. He didn't push me back, but he did say, you shall regret that, sacrilegious dog!" Cerrific Looks like & blow it. How was I to know Treatly was a holiday? They moved off further into the desert to conduct their ceremony out of my sight. A little later, while I was lying on my cot, trying to figure out what to say to them that wouldn't sound too much like an apology, one of the men came into my tent. He seemed real friendly, and asked for the Calfskin of kurness. I figured they d gotten over my little flareup and all was forguen.

He brought the Calfskin back a few minutes ago. I'm going to write to Miss Ellingworth back in the States to assure her everything's going okay. One thing I don't need is for her to have someone close for this job, especially after what I've been through. A few swigs of kumiss should get me through the letter OK.

Sally \$400
Abdul £25
Vahmin £12ustip!
Mom \$28\$48
plis 5% interest
Joyce \$50 plus dinner





AirMail

Roll Ellingsworth 55 Wheeler Street Cambridge, MA 02138 USA

## HOTEL AMÉRICAIN

Abbas Hilmil Blvd. El Menhir, Egypt 8-6130-5 Cable: HASKELLOTELS

August 12

Dear Rose,

Here we are at the site the same site that

your father's expedition occupied almost 65 years ago,

and things could hardly be any better. The weather

is about average for the season - it'd be about 105 in

the shade, if there were any shade - and aside from

the occasional sandstorms, our comp has remained

a merry one. Abdul and the boys are having a wonderful time, and we're all hitting it off just fine. brothers under the skin. Notwithstanding the archaeological importance of the find and the profits it may accrue, the greatest tressure I'll bring back from this journey is the wealth of understanding L've gained through fur brish cultural exchange of Customs and ideas. The other night, for instance. I treated the fellows to their first orielettes, and you should have heard the exclamations with which they greated this new culinary experience. For my part, Im rapidly acquiring a taste for Kunise, a refreshing native beverage made from fermented

Carnel's milk. At first the flavor seemed strange to my western polate, but of late l've grown exceedingly familiar with it. In fact, I'm enjoying a stoup of kunish right now. I shall be sure to bring you a bottle or two of this resty concoction apour my return. a slight delay while we want for the new navigation box toarrive. (I may have forgotten to mention in my previous letter that the old box became damaged just as we were setting out.) Nevertheless, such is the spirit Of camaraderic and good fellowship here in camp that the boys voluntarily continued digging on the off Chance that we might locate the pyramid without the

aid of scientific instrumentation, this steadfastness in the face of adversity is truly heartwarming and I've rewarded the crew by giving them today off. this has given me a chance to get off by myself and relax. The strain of command must be telling on me - just now, as I was sipping some kumiss, I began to feel lightheaded, and my knees buckled slightly. Or perhaps I'm just intoxicated with the awe-inspiring vastness of this solitude that surrounds me. In any case, I shall have to lay this letter aside for the time being, until this numbres & leaves my hands and the landscape stops writing around so violently. . Hello I hat have been staring at the same grain of sand

for last hour and have you ever heard it said that if you move one grain of sand you Change the course of history? well here goes nothing-There, I done it, hope I've made the world a better place to live in.... My my doesn't I feel strange tonight I wonder what's come over me but wait !!! there was something very important & meant to tell you about this waistland of yes now framewhe Did you ever stop to think that T. S. Eliot's name is an anagram for toilets? I think I mow understand what he was trying to tell us all, must be the desertsuns played mischiff with my eyes for now are gaze across

the moonlit dunes who are in no way related to lornadure i see they we turned into crashing Curling waves in an Endless sea to Shining see how they cast strange shadowshapen of wild arabian demons who are coming for me with any final summer with kitchey with dinahase possible its the homonof win the kitchey with dinahase possibly its the kumiss thats causing these tiny little spots to dance and swirl before my eyes like granes of Sand through an hourglas so are the days of our life savings blown on a hopeless expidision thats gowna get you truly killed just so i can watch these ...

until theywe changed into grarled blue men about two foot tall with everying behind their twisting bristly green wiskers that hang all thoway to their shinnighinshins as the three little pigs used to say in Diglation servay servay coway ale way home home on the range Where there's no place like home & so proviasis is that A shadow i see moving or cood it be about returning cood it he mack the knibe cood it be desert sickness what cood it be

this cotton mouthed reguesting brain feverish rubberarms and legs and head for the hills are alive with the sound of musicher and ealive win.
icher may be its somein.
i shouldwe left that last deviledhamments. Sieker may be its something i ate guera

Horoglyphic cube found 27 September 1920 Oute measures 4 x 4 x 4"x 4"



Horo olyphic cube

found 27 September 1920

Ale measures 4 × 4 × 4 

with hisroglyphics legible vas side.

Congrostion Neumolitic limestone.

Hexaglyphics on cube

match the symbols protect symbols

Support the first Pyramid

hypothesis.

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