

Who, When, Wow! Mystery Edition

Alexander's Tomb

Carly. Psst! Hey! It's your favorite secret host here, from your favorite secret podcast. Today I went back in time more than two thousand years. I checked out a famous old city on the shores of the Mediterranean, plus got to visit one of the seven wonders of the ancient world! So stay tuned for an epic adventure. I'm Carly Q, and this is Who When Wow, Mystery Edition!

(THEME SONG)

(Soundbite of Carly entering the office to cheery music.)

Carly. I came into the office today cheery on the outside.

Carly in the background. Hi Carol!

Carol. Hey Carly Q.

Carly. But secretly devastated on the inside.

(Soundbite of basement door opening and closing.)

Carly. Devastated why, you ask? Because yesterday my favorite broom went missing!

Carly in the background. Oh Broomy, where oh where could you be?

Carly. I know it might sound a little odd, but every once in a while I get the urge to SWEEP. It's very therapeutic. And a surprisingly good workout if you do it long enough!

Carly in the background. Okaaaay according to my checklist I've searched the maintenance closet, the break room, my super secret ceiling spot with all my snacks.

Carly. And this one broom is my favorite. Literally the best broom that ever broommed. It's not even worth using other brooms! But since yesterday, when I felt that ol' sweepin' urge come over me, I can't find it anywhere!

Carly in the background. Someone MUST have taken it. Stolen it! It's the only explanation.

(Soundbite of Lewis walking down the stairs.)

Lewis. Carly Quuu. What ya doing?

Carly. When Lewis come down and found me drawing up a wanted poster for it-

Carly in the background. Wanted: the safe return of a beloved broom. Reward: Anything you want!

Carly. I told him my theory for what happened. (crying)

Lewis. Wait. You think someone stole a *broom*?

Carly. Yes, Yes! This is yet another example of the weirdness going on around here.

Lewis. Ugh, You're not back on that, are you?

Carly. Someone is onto us Lewis. They must be! They know about us secretly using the time elevator and now they're taunting us by taking my broom!

Lewis. I really don't think they are. And I certainly don't think your missing broom is evidence of it. I mean it's probably just evidence that someone hates dust bunnies.

Carly. I was gearing up for a perfect response when suddenly,

(Soundbite of a thumb drive drops down the vacuum tube.)

Carly and Lewis. A new time-sealed file!

Audio File. Event: In 365 CE (BEEP) Alexandria, Egypt, (BEEP) missing tomb (BEEP).

Carly. Missing broom?! You mean this happened in ancient Egypt too?

Lewis. TOMB, Carly. TOMB. T-O-M-B. TOMB, TOMB, TOMB. Not broom. As in, where someone is buried. And it's been missing since the year 365!

Carly. Whoaa. I pulled out my handheld digital assistance device --

H-dad. H-dad, ready for action!

Carly. And plugged in the clues from the file. 365 CE, Alexandria Egypt, missing tomb.

H-dad. This likely refers to the lost tomb of Alexander the Great, the ancient Macedonian king who created one of the largest empires in human history.

Carly. Cool! What else you got H-dad?

H-dad. After his death in 323 BCE, he was eventually entombed in the city he founded, Alexandria. But by 400 CE, the location of the tomb had been lost, and to this day remains unknown.

Lewis. How do you "lose" the location of a tomb? He died, they buried him and then... forgot where?

Carly. Well they didn't exactly have GoogleMaps back then.

Lewis. Okay fair. But then what happened in the year 365?

H-dad. In 365 CE, Alexandria was hit by a tsunami and the ancient part of the city began to sink. Alexandria survived but only because the Egyptians rebuilt the new city on top of the sunken parts. And the tomb and Alexander's remains were never found again.

Lewis. I wonder where it went.

Carly. Well. I am working on a theory.

Lewis. Please don't say aliens.

Carly. Of course not!

Lewis. Thank You.

Carly. I mean, in this case it would have to be ancient Egyptian mermaid aliens which is not completely off the table.

Lewis. Ugh here we go.

Carly. But I am working on a different hypothesis which would tie in Alexander's tomb with my missing broom, you see both things went missing under mysterious circumstances. Tomb and broom rhyme with each other. Obviously there's be some kind of connection, you know?

Lewis. Okay, I'm just gonna go now! See you at lunchtime.

Carly. Lewis went up to get some work done before lunch, while I told my rat friend Nibbles about the missing broom.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. You're on the case, Nibs? What do you mean?

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. You're gonna check every nook and cranny of this place to try and find my missing broom?! Nibs you are incredible!

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. We high-fived, well high for her, low for me and she took off to search. I got down to work, and a few hours later,

P.A. Voice. Attention, Butthead employees: it's Deep Fried Friday! Put our fry cooks to the test, whatever you brought for lunch today, bring it to the kitchen and see if they can fry it!

(Soundbite of footsteps coming down the metal steps.)

Lewis. That's lunch!

Carly. I love Deep Fried Friday. So I grabbed H-dad, and we took off for the elevator. I mean to have a rhyme across time? Obviously, there's more to this story.

Lewis. Oh boy, here we go. Shakespeare showed up all of a sudden. Now Carly, I told you you're not a poet.

(Soundbite of walking to elevator.)

Carly. Hey Odie!

Odie. Hello basement companion! Lewis.

Lewis. Hi Odie! We've got a real ancient mystery for you today. Ever heard of the lost tomb of Alexander the Great?

Odie. Of course, I'm the only one who knows where it is.

Carly and Lewis. Wait, really?

Odie. No, of course not. But this is an excellent mystery. There was quite a lot of drama after Alexander's death.

Lewis. Oooh, I love drama!

Carly. Me too!

Odie. Really? I hadn't noticed?

Carly. Keep going.

Odie. Ok. Despite his wish to be buried at the temple of Zeus-Ammon in the Siwa Oasis in Egypt, Alexander's general Ptolemy stole his body and brought it to the city of Memphis instead.

Lewis. Memphis, Tennessee? The birthplace of Rock & Roll?

Odie. Memphis *Egypt*. But sometime around 275 BCE, Alexander's remains were taken to his namesake city, Alexandria, where they remained until the tomb went missing a few hundred years later.

Carly. This is a juicy one. I can't wait!

Odie. Then let's review the time travel rules.

Lewis. No changing anything in the past!

Carly. And be back by the end of lunch time!

Odie. Yes! Also, the elevator's time cloak function that will change your clothes, and the translation function so you can understand the local languages.

Lewis. Got it!

Carly. Roger that!

Odie. Remember that you can always fast forward to other times on the file. For example, You may want to visit the Alexander's funeral procession in Alexandria first. That way, you get a sense for the city before the tsunami hit.

Carly. Hm Good thinking Odie.

Odie. Then I think you're ready to go. But just remember: The waves of history lap at every shore.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

Lewis. Like surfing?

Odie. Okay here you go. Surf's up.

Carly. Wait. I forgot to ask if you seen my broommm?

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises then thud.)

Carly. OK. Here we go. Stepping out of the elevator, we are in a little hidden corner behind a big stone arch.

Lewis. This must be Alexandria. Look at the city gate! And all the people!

Carly. Lewis was right, the entrance was bustling with people from all walks of life. Shopkeepers and peasants, soldiers, fishermen, carpenters, priests.

Lewis. A real metropolis.

Carly. The city itself looked mostly flat, lots of houses and other buildings in neat rows. But there was also a giant building under construction off in the distance.

Lewis. I wonder what that big building's gonna be.

Carly. Me too. But I also wonder where we're gonna find.

Lewis. Hey! Look!

Carly. Oh. Never mind!

Carly. Down the road a big procession of soldiers were walking beside a chariot bearing an enormous, ornate casket.

Lewis. I'm guessing that's the remains of Alexander the Great?

Carly. They sure didn't skimp on the coffin. Let's go take a look! We walked over towards the procession. As we got close, a soldier with a fancier uniform than the others came over.

Captain. Who goes there?

Carly. Sorry, we don't mean to interrupt.

Lewis. Just wanted to get a closer look.

Captain. And what are you two supposed to be? Philosophers?

Carly. Uh...yeah! Yes we are, we're just a couple of philosophers out for a nice philosophizing stroll.

Lewis. Right. We think therefore...here we are!

Captain. I take it you wish to pay homage to the remains of the great general, Alexander?

Carly. We do indeed. Where exactly would you say you're headed with ol' Alexander here?

Captain. We are destined for a mausoleum called The Soma.

Lewis. Mausoleum?

Carly. It's a building that holds tombs. Sort of like an indoor graveyard.

Lewis. Cool. Also, gross.

Captain. The Soma is a walled-off district that contains the remains of many other kings. A special tomb for Alexander has been carved into the rock below.

Carly. Hm. And will anyone be allowed to go in to see it? Or is it like, only for the big wigs?

Captain. Excuse me?

Lewis. How 'bout this, is there a fee?

Carly. And do we need to make a reservation?

Lewis. Do we just get tickets at the door? Do we need a wristband? Is there a gift shop?

Captain. I am perplexed. Why do you care so much for these prosaic details of Alexander's remains when you are philosophers, concerned with the mysteries of the mind?

Carly. Welllllll, that IS the big question isn't it? Are any of us REALLY concerned about anything? Or is there really anything to be concerned ABOUT?

Captain. Uhhh. hmmm. Uhhhh.

Carly. I pulled Lewis aside while the Captain wrapped his head around my absolute brilliance. I'm pretty good at this philosophy thing, huh?

Lewis. Yeah, it looks like you maybe broke his brain?

Carly. Maybe we should get to the elevator and fast forward ahead to a later time?

Lewis. Good idea. I think the file said 366 CE.

Carly. We snuck away and went back to the elevator. Year 366 here we come!

(Soundbite of elevator ding and travel noises, then thud.)

Carly. OK. Stepping BACK out of the elevator and, Wow, this city looks so different! Guess that tends to happen after six hundred years.

Lewis. It's on a whole new level. Literally!

Carly. Lewis was pointing at the stone foundations under the entrance gate. It was higher up than it used to be, because the whole main level of the city was higher!

Lewis. Just like H-dad said about tsunami flooding everything and how they just rebuilt on top of it all.

Carly. Plus look at that big building we saw before. All finished! It was an absolutely huuuuuuge lighthouse, it must have been thirty or forty stories tall, at least!

Lewis. Well what do you say? Should we start looking around for Alex's tomb?

Carly. Let's do it! We went into the city to start our search. Hey there! Mind if we ask you some questions?

Random Person #1. Uhhh. OK, I guess.

Carly. Asking pretty much every person we saw about the tomb. Excuse me good citizen? Do you know anything about Alexander's Tomb?

Random Person #2. Alexander *who* now?

Lewis. Uh, the guy they named the city after?

Random Person #2. Buried here?

Carly. Yes, potentially submerged underwater in all the flooding last year?

Random Person #2. Uhh, I don't know.

Carly. But we didn't get a lot to go on. It was the same city, but after hundreds of years, there was a completely different society living there. We heard he was buried in a place called The Soma? In the Royal District?

Random Person #2. Uh...then maybe look there?

Carly. We realized that was....actually not a bad idea, so we went and checked it out. But all we found in the Royal District were big fancy houses.

Lewis. No mausoleums, no burial spots, no entrance to any underground tombs.

Carly. We went to other areas of the city, we checked out gardens and schools, bakeries and theaters. We kept asking questions.

Lewis. Excuse me, what do you know about this part of town?

Random Person #3. There used to be a huge library here. Very famous, but that was when my great grandmother was just a child.

Carly. The Library of Alexandria! I've heard of that! It was supposed to be one of the greatest sources of knowledge in the ancient world!

Lewis. Nothing lasts forever I guess.

Carly. She also told us that her grandmother heard that Alexander's remains had been secretly stolen and removed from the city.

Random Person #3. Maybe they were thieves, or grave-robbers? Or just really big fans of Mr. Alexander? Or maybe it was all a rumor and didn't even happen!

Lewis. (sighs) It's one dead end after another.

Carly. Finally we found ourselves at that big lighthouse we had seen. Wait a minute! Lewis!! This isn't any old lighthouse. It's the famous Lighthouse of Alexandria! It was destroyed later in the 1400's, but it's one of the seven wonders of the ancient world!

Lewis. Wow! Let's go up!

Carly. It is going to be a lot of stairs. Are you emotionally prepared for that?

Lewis. Obviously Carly. Who do you think you're talking to?

Carly. Fine, don't stretch. Lewis and I climbed all the way to the top of the lighthouse.

(Soundbite of climbing stairs.)

Lewis. (panting) Ugh, maybe next time we wait until...the escalator... has been invented. Just in case. Not that I'm complaining.

Carly. Told you to stretch! Phew! That was a hike!. The view was amazing! From one side we could see the whole of Alexandria. And from the other, the Mediterranean Sea shining in the afternoon sunlight.

Lewis. I understand why they call this an ancient wonder. I have pretty high standards but this is incredible!

Carly. Unfortunately, being able to see the whole city didn't provide us any clues about the tomb. I decided it was time to check in with H-dad.

Carly. H-dad you finished analyzing yet? Did anyone ever find this tomb or what?

H-dad. Negative! There are records of more than 140 officially sanctioned excavations in the search for Alexander's tomb, but none were successful.

Lewis. Well at least we're in good company.

Carly. Any theories for what might have happened?

H-dad. Many potential theories exist for the fate of Alexander's tomb, including that it may have been moved out of Egypt, potentially to Venice Italy, or to Macedonia Greece.

Carly. So maybe someone really did steal his remains, like that person's grandmother had heard.

H-dad. None of these theories have been proven conclusively, but in 2021, local officials believe they may have found remnants of his tomb in Siwa, Egypt, A city near the border with Libya.

Carly. Wow, Italy, Greece, Libya. This is one traveling tomb!

Lewis. Ugh Alexander's remains have seen more of the world than I have! And I'm amazing.

H-dad. Incoming message from BUTTHED HQ:

P.A. Voice. Attention Butthead employees: five minutes until the end of Deep Fried Friday lunch break! Also if you have any extra fire extinguishers, please bring them to the kitchen immediately.

Carly. Guess we should head back! We raced down the lighthouse, made our way back to the elevator, and moments later.

Lewis. Do you think they burned the building? All my stuff is in there. My scripts, my loafers, all my things. Carly, Carly, are you even listening to me?

Carly. I hope nobody deep fried my broom by mistakeeeee.

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises then loud thud.)

Carly. Well looks like the building's still standing. Hi Odie.

Odie. Welcome back you two. How was Alexandria?

Carly. Amazing! It was so fun to see an old city like that. And when we went back again in 366 you could really tell how much had changed, especially after the flooding the year before.

Lewis. But what is that smell?? Eww, is that you Carly?

Odie. Someone tried to deep fry quinoa for lunch. But nevermind that. What about the tomb of Alexander the Great?

Lewis. There's lots of theories for what might have happened to it, and LOTS of people have gone looking, but still nothing definitive.

Carly. Egyptian officials in 2021 think they may have found his tomb in the Siwa Oasis, which would be full circle, since that's where Alexander himself had wished to be buried!

Odie. Full circle indeed.

Carly. It was pretty cool too to see some famous landmarks, like the Lighthouse of Alexandria.

Lewis. Great views, ten out of ten, would definitely recommend.

Carly. But when we went back in 366, the famous *Library* of Alexandria was already gone. Just like the lighthouse is now. Time just keeps on turning, huh? Which I'm realizing is probably what you meant with your riddle.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

Odie. The waves of history lap at every shore.

Carly. You meant that history and the passing of time comes for everything and everyone, even a wildly successful leader like Alexander the Great! Wherever his tomb really lies, history has washed away the details.

Lewis. Wow Carly. You kind of ARE good at that philosophy thing!

Carly. Just then Nibbles popped in from the hallway.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Oh hey! I was just about to say, I guess the waves of history lapped at my broom too. Unless you've had any luck Nibbles?

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Lewis. Is she pointing at something? Right there, next to the elevator?

Carly. Hey! There it is! THE LOST BROOM OF THE CARLY THE Q!

Odie. I didn't know this was your broom, basement companion.

Carly. How did it end up here?

Odie. I was using it.

Carly. (gasps) You were?

Odie. I can't explain it, once every decade or so I get the urge to SWEEP.

Carly. O.M.G.I.R.L ME TOO!!

Odie. Too much, too much.

Lewis. Wow that is, a very unique hobby.

Carly. We're so alike Odie! If you don't mind though, can I take it back and do some sweeping of my own? Some solo sweeping? Ya know, You get it?

Odie. Please do!

Carly. Ugh Thank you!

Lewis. See Carly Q. Nothing weird going on at BUTTHEAD at all.

Carly. I don't know about that Lewis. I'd invite you to help me sweep but as I said to Odie, this is a solo sweep.

Lewis. Uhhh. I think I'd rather vacuum. See you later Carly Quuu.

Carly. And sweep I did! After saying goodbye to Lewis I spent the better part of the afternoon sweeping up a storm, and let me tell you, it felt great!

Carly in the background. (singing) This is my solo sweep.

Carly. What an adventure looking for that tomb! It's not every day you see an ancient wonder of the world. It's so easy to get caught up in our busy lives, it's nice to be reminded of how rich and expansive the past really is. Anyway, that's it for today. Tune in next time for another time-sealed mystery. Until then, this is Carly Q, signing off. And remember: you never heard this!

(Soundbite of sweeping.)