


# PATHFINDER<sup>®</sup>

ADVENTURE PATH<sup>™</sup>

## MUMMY'S MASK

ADVENTURE PATH  PART 4 OF 6

# SECRETS OF THE SPHINX





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# MUMMY'S MASK



## CONFESSIONS OF A GUY WHO USES HIS MIDDLE INITIAL IN HIS SIGNATURE

**M**y name is Greg, and I'm an AP addict. Hi, Greg! You may have seen my name before on an occasional Paizo product. It usually appears as with my middle initial "A" in it. Why the "A," you ask? Well, that's a good question. It just so happens that there's an actor named Greg Vaughan (same spelling and everything); he's a month younger than me and is from my neck of the woods, having grown up just down the interstate from me. He's also been an underwear model and at least once replaced Fabio as the spokesman for I Can't Believe It's Not Butter! (and maybe still is, I can't say that I've kept track). Anyway, obviously the physical resemblance is uncanny as well (I kid, I kid). But unless I want to be mistaken for a

super-successful, handsome-as-the-devil, butter-peddling, underwear-modeling star of stage and television, I figured I'd better do something to distinguish myself. I'm trying to remember why I wanted to do that now. But there it is, the most frequently asked question I ever get.

Back to my addiction, though. It's true that I've written in every AP that Paizo has produced after Shackled City. No seriously, look in all of them. I'm there, like a stubborn rash or that weird neighbor peeking over your fence that you just can't get rid of and even bought the house next to you again after you moved just because you have all the fake-butter groupies and are a member of the Mankini-of-the-Month Club. Yes, that's a thing; no, I don't know anything about it. As I was saying, I am in all of them.



So as you can see, I have a problem. In fact, the streak has gotten so long that it has almost become a dare between me and the good folks at Paizo as to who would flinch first. I've thought about retyping the first three chapters of *Fifty Shades of Grey* in Pig Latin and throwing in a few stat blocks as my turnover just to see if they'd break first, but decided maybe that wasn't the best idea after all. You're welcome. Besides, I figure Nick Logue will get around to it anyway with his Hook Mountain ogres (zing!).

I've had this *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* standoff going on with Paizo and the other Greg Vaughan (I consider the underwear guy to be "The Ugly," though YMMV), for a full 7 years. Quite simply something had to give, and it turns out it was me.

Some of you may already know this, but for those of you who don't and are still awake, I'll explain my reasons for ending "The Streak" as I call it, or "The Time of Troubles" as I think I heard James Jacobs mutter under his breath once. Somewhere along the road of life, I asked myself what else a guy with a wife, three kids, a career in insurance claims, a sweet writing gig, and a hobby as a butter salesman impersonator needs in his life. Why, medical school, of course! So I applied to the University of Oklahoma's College of Medicine, paid some hefty bribes, stalked a few members of the applicant review board, gave out some free fake butter samples, threatened to pose on campus every day in underwear, and somehow miraculously got accepted. I also received a court order against wearing anything less than a full ghillie suit within a thousand feet of campus, but that's another matter.

I started in the Fall of 2012 and actually managed to complete the first year while writing an AP adventure for *Reign of Winter* and one for *Wrath of the Righteous* (though James had mercy on me and teamed up with me on the latter—thanks James!), but I finally had to admit that I simply wasn't smart and/or talented enough to keep this up for long. I think I probably named half-a-dozen villains in my latest AP turnovers after assorted enteric bacteria before they were thankfully caught by the pens of James and Rob, and I don't think the professor in my Blood-Hematopoiesis-Lymphopoiesis course was amused when she asked what the number one cause of death has been among adults in the Western Hemisphere, and I said, "Orcs, if you don't count Casmaron." It was starting to get to me.

I was fortunate to be able to sit down with James, Rob, Wes, Adam, and a bunch of the other guys and gals of Paizo this last summer and talk to them about my future in writing for them. They knew I was in school and had been very supportive, and their attitude did not change. They understood the conflicting demands upon my time and recognized that I had to prioritize my family and school. In fact, they couldn't have been more gracious in their support and encouragement.

## ON THE COVER

This month's cover brings us the eponymous leader of the Cult of the Forgotten Pharaoh, whom the PCs will finally confront as they seek the stolen body of the architect Chisisek inside the ancient halls of the Sightless Sphinx. The cult has been a thorn in the PCs' side since the beginning—but defeating the Forgotten Pharaoh may not be the victory the PCs were hoping for.



So here I sit as the *Mummy's Mask* Adventure Path makes its run with nary an adventure in it to call my own. For many of you that might be a relief, a chance for new blood to break into the APs or even (and I shudder at the thought) to let Richard Pett begin to catch up to me in the number of AP adventures written. But for me, at least, it's the end of an era, and I'm not ashamed to say I'm a little bit sad. I'm going to miss the old streak and the unbearable pressure of it weighing down on me every day. Okay, maybe not that, but you know what I mean.

However, in the immortal words of Hubert J. Farnsworth, "Good news, everyone!" Though my streak of writing AP adventures officially ends with *The Midnight Isles*, my streak of appearing in APs for Paizo will continue, as Rob asked me to pen a foreword and Adam said I could wash his car and "stuff." Sort of like a methadone clinic for my AP addiction. So I get to appear in *Mummy's Mask*, as well as in *Adventure Paths* to follow, if in a reduced capacity, and hopefully in a few years when some classes and clinical rotations are out of the way, I'll be able to take up the adventure pen once more. Yeah, the streak isn't quite the same without writing the adventures, but honestly I'll take what I can get. I owe everyone at Paizo a big "Thank you!" and I owe one to all of you as well.

Whether I've deserved to or not (debatable, I know), I've gotten to share each and every Adventure Path with you since *Age of Worms*. I've put so much of my own home game, ideas, and characters in them over the years that I feel like I've had a chance to sit at the table and roll the bones with each of you to some extent, and that's a big deal to me. I've made friends with people I never would have met and gotten to talk to them about this shared hobby, and in the final tally, I think that's what it's been all about.

So to all of you who have patiently endured The Streak all this time—thanks! It wouldn't have been the same without you.

Greg A. Vaughan  
Pathfinder Adventure Path Addict