



The Golden Scarab

S.W. Lothian

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Adventure dwells in all of us. It sits quietly like a shadow, waiting to launch us into something spectacular. We all dream of incredible places. We all dream of incredible heroes. We all dream of incredible lives. Sometimes, those dreams become real.

JJ Sterling has that same yearning for adventure. To break free from the norm ... to be the best he can be ... to save the world ... to be a hero. Enter, the Museum of Grandovia, home to a million incredible secrets. JJ has a curious encounter amid a trove of ancient treasures. Someone is calling him. Someone needs him. It's time for a new hero to rise.

A long-time feud between two powerful brothers, Seth and Horus, threatens the fragile peace in ancient Egypt. JJ and his best friend, Linc, must transcend time to save the day. Joined by new ally, Rani, they embark on a perilous race through scorching deserts, and temples full of hidden chambers primed with deadly traps. All the while, an army of deadly statues, known as Uberdiles, are determined to stop them at all cost.

It's up to the three to find the mysterious Golden Scarab, defeat the threat of evil and save history. If they fail, the impact on the future will be a disaster.

Praise for JJ STERLING and the GOLDEN SCARAB

2013 Readers' Favorite Book Award Finalist

"This tale is a great adventure ... I was enthralled ..." - READERS' FAVORITE

"This story is unique, action-packed and exciting ... I was totally hooked ..." - THIS KID REVIEWS BOOKS

Once you've caught your breath, continue to ride the incredible JJ STERLING adventure series:

JJ STERLING and the CURSED NILE (Book 2)

"...absolutely wonderful - even better than the first." - MOTHER DAUGHTER BOOK REVIEWS

JJ STERLING and the FALLEN PHARAOH (Book 3)

"Wow! This third book is absolutely awesome." - GOODREADS

JJ STERLING and the MISSING LINK (Book 4 - due in 2017)

The Golden Scarab Details

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From Reader Review The Golden Scarab for online ebook

Jemima Pett says

JJ is absolutely ordinary. His friend Linc is pretty normal, especially with his love of food and adventure, probably in that order! So how come a statue in a museum starts talking to them?

This is a time travel adventure, where JJ and his friend are invited to go on a Quest and are magically transported back to ancient Egypt by the god Horus. There they meet Rani, also transported back in time, but from Aswan. I was never quite clear what era Rani was from, but it didn't seem to matter. They meet other secondary characters, not too many though, and carry out various parts of their quest in Memphis, Bubastis and Heliopolis, pursued all the while by the evil god Seth's evil henchmen, the Uberdiles, sort of half-crocodile giants who generally take the form of statues, but sometimes mini sandstorms (sand devils).

There are a lot of statues in this book, most of whom have magical powers, usually either to attack our heroes or protect them. There are a lot of secret tunnels, a huge number of spiders, and a delightfully described maze with plenty of clues for the threesome to solve, accompanied at times by a magical cat named Mau. The boobytraps in the maze/caverns/underground temples structures are absolutely amazing, and take the reader through the second half of the book at breakneck pace!

I found the early part of the book a little disjointed, especially in its sentence structure, and I wasn't sure that the Prelude added anything to the story. I also found the use of slang in speech inconsistent - early on the ancient Egyptians don't understand some of JJ's and Linc's comments (e.g. cool) and later one of the ancients says 'ok'. But this is a first book, and I think the author warmed to his story-telling well. The characters are engaging and, well, noble, without being cloying - JJ makes a great boy-next-door type, Linc is a solid best friend and Rani is clever and isolated in her desert home. Now where have I heard of a threesome like that before? I suppose it is a standard recipe, but it didn't seem out of place (or stereotypical) when I was reading it.

I have the advantage of having been to Egypt and explored some of the tombs and temples, and the Pyramids, but I think the principles are well-enough known through Indiana Jones and school history lessons for most readers to take full advantage of the author's excellent descriptions of the scenes and structures. The Egyptian mythology/history is handled well. Early on I felt there was a little too much telling and not enough showing, but once the quest began in earnest, the descriptions fell into place and were vivid and imaginative.

It turns into a rollicking adventure and I am keen to find out what they get up to next! This is the first book in a series - the third book is launched next month - and it shows great promise. I think Mr Lothian has found his true calling at last!

Wendy says

I loved this! It's a proper adventure with all the essential elements: intrepid young heroes, a thrilling quest and a life-threatening chase set against the exotic backdrop of ancient Egypt, all culminating in the triumph of good over evil as the ultimate goal is achieved. What more could you wish for? This exciting story should satisfy any young reader with a thirst for escapist fantasy but, as a "slightly older" reader(!), I particularly enjoyed the historical content, the vivid description and the attention to detail ... and I have to add that any

book featuring three time-travelling children and a talking cat gets my vote every time!!

Dee says

I was very impressed with this book although this is written for the younger generation, I really enjoyed the whole concept of the story and fell in love with all the characters especially Mau. Of course the book as it is does need some editing with typos and some missing words to make complete sense of the sentences but other than that the story line is well thought out and follows through to the last page. The descriptions of the characters are very detailed and descriptive. I felt like I knew these kids. The author has really done his research and all the information about Egypt was very interesting. The really great thing I liked was the fast pace of the story line and the degree of intrigue the author played into it. All three of the kids were very intense and full of personality. They each played off each other and I found that quite intriguing. I liked the part of the plot at the end tying everything together in a way that I never saw coming, but you know I don't ever give away the ending in my reviews. I will definitely be adding the other two books in this series to my reading list. I received this book through Goodreads group "Making Connections" from the author for an honest review.

Renee says

Here's what my daughter and I have to say:

DAUGHTER SAYS:

What I liked and disliked about it:

I liked the story because it was cool. It was really cool when the statues were coming to life. The Uberdiles were scary but it was funny that my Mom didn't know how to pronounce that word. I liked how they were being chased and then they were ok and then they were chased again, over and over. That made the story exciting.

I liked how it talks about Egyptian Gods and I learned a lot about them. I also thought it was cool that in Egypt, cats are very important and are treated like royalty. I liked the labyrinth because you could only move on when the sun was shining. I liked that there were booby traps all over the place. It would be scary if I fell into the black hole in the bottom of the inverted pyramid.

I also liked the three kids in the story. I liked that the characters went back in time and I would like to go back in time too. I didn't really understand about where Rani came from and I'd like to know more about her.

My bottom line:

I loved this book it was really cool and exciting and I want to read the second one. I would recommend it to boys and girls 8 years and older.

MOM SAYS:

What I liked and disliked about it:

Look out Rick Riordan (author of The Kane Chronicles), you've got some competition in bringing Egyptian mythology to life! Part Raiders of the Lost Ark, part The Story of the Amulet (Nesbit), and all jam-packed action, Lothian transports us to ancient Egypt, where the reader is whisked off along a fast-paced, whirlwind of an adventure led by three unlikely heroes.

I am a junkie of Greek, Roman, Norse, and Egyptian mythology. When I was a little girl, we had two sets of encyclopedias in our house. I would randomly choose a book and open it to any page. Within three pages either forward or backward from that spot, there would be a write-up of some mythological character. I became well-versed in all things mythological. So, when I picked up The Golden Scarab and began reading about Egyptian Gods, I knew I would love this book.

In fact, that is one of the strengths of this book - the author really takes the time to explain each Egyptian God (e.g., Anubis is the protector of the deceased and their tombs; Horus is the god of the sky and protector of the people of Egypt; Seth is the god of deserts, storms, darkness and chaos; etc.). Importantly, each of the gods included in the story play a key role in the plot - these are not random Egyptian gods inserted in the story. Further, the author also spends time describing various aspects of ancient Egyptian culture such as the importance of cats, the history of the Tesev Mummy, and Egyptian hieroglyphics; and again, each aspect is important in the overall story. All of these pieces tie together in the overall plot - they are not random inclusions.

The three main characters are very different from one another and very likable. JJ is the leader of the three and hero of the story. Linc is the funny side-kick who provides a heart of gold, loyalty, and comic relief. Rani is the serious but clever mysterious addition to the group. Together these three balance each other out, each using their strengths at the right time during the quest. Interestingly, each of the character's vulnerabilities (e.g., JJ's lack of confidence, Rani's initial aloofness) were also described. This served to create more well-rounded characters. That being said, I think there is still room to develop Rani's character further to make her that much more appealing to female readers.

Raiders of the Lost Ark is one of my favorite movies of all times. I loved watching Indiana Jones maneuvering his way through all the booby traps, mazes, and snake pits (ok, there are no snake pits in this book, but there is a little something with scorpions!) This is one of the things that is so well-done in this book. First, there are scary Uberdiles (nasty Egyptian statues come to life) relentlessly chasing the kids in the book. Second, the kids encounter many puzzles they have to solve, complex three dimensional mazes they have to make their way through, all the while navigating numerous and deadly booby traps. The tension builds and abates in waves throughout the book - LOVE IT!

Just when you think the story is coming to an end, Lothian throws in a hook. I can't really reveal what it is - you'll have to discover that for yourself - but suffice it to say that we are keenly interested in reading the next book. Hmm...
Hmmm...

One final note...I know that there were editing/grammar/spelling errors in the previous edition of this book. These appear to have been fixed in the latest edition. There were no such distractions in the book we read.

My bottom line:

This book was, quite simply put, a rockin' good time. The story is solid, the characters are likable, the action is non-stop, and there is even educational value regarding Egyptian mythology and culture. I would

recommend this book to boys and girls aged 8+ with the warning that, at some points, the Uberdiles were even freaking ME out!

****The Golden Scarab was provided to us by the author free-of-charge in exchange for our honest opinion.****

Sandra Stiles says

The Golden Scarab is book one in the Quest Series. J.J. is 12 years old. My students will identify with him because they are also middle graders. J.J.'s father is the head curator at a museum. His family visits the museum one day and J.J. wanders into an Egyptian exhibit. The statue of Anubis begins to talk with J.J. He is the protector of the mummy at the museum. He challenges J.J. to find a friend and travel through time to find the Golden Scarab. This scarab will save Egypt from Seth, an evil god. J.J. recruits his best friend Linc and they travel through time where they meet Rani, a young girl who also travels through time to help find the scarab. The three of them must battle Uberdiles, find their way through mazes, and avoid booby-traps, and deliver the golden scarab to stop Seth.

That alone is enough to entice any child, young adult, or adult. For me as a parent, grandparent, and teacher, I love the fact that this book, of interest to young and old will teach the reader about friendship, trust, courage, being a risk-taker, caring, and a balanced person. This book embodies the IB learner profiles we teach at school. In the mix they will find a wonderful way to learn about ancient Egyptian cultures, gods, etc. Do I recommend this book? You bet I do.

D.M. Dutcher says

Okay premise and some decent research are dragged down by the writing.

J.J. visits a local museum one day and is chosen by the God Anubis to go back in time to the days of ancient Egypt. There's a mystical golden scarab that the evil god Seth wants, and he must not obtain it. J.J. isn't alone, however: his friend Linc, another summoned child named Rani, and the servant of Bast named Mau accompany him. The god Horus is their ally as well. Together the three children must flee an army of living statues as they face trap after trap. Can they frustrate Seth and make it back to their own time?

There's an interesting story in here, but unfortunately the writing needs a lot of work. There's too much showing instead of telling, often done by a single character saying almost a e-reader screen's worth of dialogue. I usually give indie books passes on the grammar, but there are some visible errors like run-on sentences that distract from the story quite a bit. The writing also needs work, because it slows down the action sequences and makes the book feel longer than it is. Less exposition and padding, and more action would have made the book much better.

I'd like to rate it higher but sadly I can't. Try the free sample and see how you like it.

Erik This Kid Reviews Books says

It all started when JJ saw a green light coming from a mummy in the Egyptian exhibit at the museum his father works for. After seeing the strange light, JJ had a weird dream and then actually met Anubis (the Egyptian god of the dead). Anubis tells JJ that he is needed to help save the world and asks JJ to go on a mission to do just that. JJ tells his best friend Linc about meeting Anubis and the mission to save the world and Linc decides to go with JJ. The boys then get whisked away to Ancient Egypt by Anubis. In Egypt the boys meet Rani a girl from their time but from a different part of the world who was also sent to ancient Egypt to help save the world. JJ, Linc and Rani meet Horus (the Egyptian god of the king and sky) and Horus tells the children they have to find the Golden Scarab before Seth (the god of the desert and chaos) finds it. The Golden Scarab holds all of Seth's powers and if he has it, the evil Seth will rule not just Egypt, but the entire world. Not only do the kids have to find the scarab, but they also have to get it to the goddess Ma'at (the goddess of truth and justice) to defeat Seth. To complete their mission, the kids must battle ruthless enemies, deal with traps and survive a long journey through ancient Egypt. Can three ordinary kids defeat the god of the desert or will the world suffer?

This story is really, really cool! When I first got the book I thought the description of it made it seem too close to the "Kane Chronicles" by Rick Riordan (one of my FAVORITE series) but I could not have been more wrong! This story is unique, action-packed and exciting. The characters are well-made and are very likeable. JJ is brave and selfless, Linc is funny and loyal and Rani is kind and smart. I thought the book started out a bit slow but after the first two chapters, I was totally hooked on the story. The action was great and it had a lot of humor in it (I actually laughed out loud at a couple of places). One problem I had with the book was it had a bunch of typos and editing errors. They were distracting when reading the book and made it a little less enjoyable. The book is clean with only some mild violence and references to gods of mythology. There's a lot of information about ancient Egypt and mythology in the book which made it even more interesting.

Grampy says

This book was reviewed by Lee Ashford for Reader's Favorite.

"Quest One: The Golden Scarab" by S.W. Lothian shares the story of JJ, Linc, and Rani, as they are called back through time by Egyptian gods Anubis and Horus to recover a golden Scarab containing the evil nature of the god Seth, and return it to the goddess Ma'at for protection so that Seth can never again become the evil being he once was, and longs to be again.

Provided by Horus with a handful of magical items to help them on their quest, these three youngsters face countless obstacles as they attempt to retrieve the Golden Scarab from within an intricate labyrinth, while being pursued by an army of Uberdiles serving Seth.

Will three children from the future be able to outwit an army of evil statues? Will they make it through the labyrinth unscathed? Will Seth be defeated in his efforts to regain his "evilness" so he can take over control of Egypt?

This tale was a great adventure, intended for a middle-grade audience, but very much enjoyable by much older adults. I was enthralled by this Quest One, and happily look forward to reading Quest Two tomorrow!

The three children quickly learned to trust and depend upon one another, as their very lives truly did depend on being able to count on each other for help. I'm not sure how this book should be classified, as it could be considered Adventure, Action, Fantasy, Sci-Fi, or even Historical Fiction. One thing is certain: it can be classified as good entertainment. It reminded me in many ways of the Indiana Jones series of movies, and in my opinion would make a very decent movie itself. I strongly recommend this for any reluctant readers in the target age group, with the understanding that Mom and Dad will also want to read it.

Alessandra says

JJ and his friend Linc, are appealed to by the Egyptian god Anubis to save the world. They travel to Ancient Egypt where they are teamed up with Rani and together all three are given instructions about their mission: stop the Egyptian god Seth from getting his evil powers and controlling all of Egypt, and subsequently, the rest of the world. Together, we race with the young heroes, hoping that they would succeed in their quests. Their enemy is powerful, and there are minions who do his bidding and whose job it is to stop the three from completing the quest. Fortunately, the young heroes have powerful allies as well, and we read this new take on the battle between good and evil, and we are able to witness the benefits of courage, teamwork and perseverance.

Any story that is directed to a young audience has to have certain elements to ensure that it is a success and a major element is the language. S. W. Lothian succeeded brilliantly with that as the language he used is simple and easy to understand. Those who pick up this book will have no problem with comprehension, which is a good thing when one is writing a children's story.

Also, the author's use of action and the fast paced tone of the story is a definite plus. It means that the audience would not get bored, and would therefore stay interested in discovering exactly what happened with the heroes and finding out how easy it was for them to complete their mission.

Another thing that is worthy of note, and which should be applauded is way the author educates his audience about Egyptian mythology. Readers would be enlightened about Egypt, without feeling like they are reading an academic piece, which is definitely what any audience, but especially the young audience would appreciate.

I really did enjoy the read, and I am looking forward to reading more of the advantages of JJ, Linc and Rani.

Jenn says

Quest One: The Golden Scarab...where does one start? It's like Enid Blyton, E Nesbit and Indiana Jones all rolled into a 200 page story! I only wish I had children so I could read this to them chapter by chapter at bedtime. Three children, one of which is a virtual stranger from a far away land, gain an interest in history once this magical tale of time travel takes them to Egypt during the era of Pharaoh's reign. Only the pure of heart can make it through the booby traps that are set throughout their adventure to find and return the golden scarab to its rightful owner.

Some of my favourite parts that occurred before the time travel escapade begins are: the slight reference to

JJ's father driving like Mr. Bean; and the fact that the Sterling family almost never gets to eat dinner as Mum's cooking is so horrible (reminiscent of my Mum's cooking, although slightly less edible in the book). Once the three children are in Egypt there are many places where I either giggled out loud (boiled cabbage??? Ewwwww!) or sat on the edge of my seat. It was one caper after the next, what with fighting Uberdiles, being saved by a transforming kitty, moving semi-blindly through a horrifying maze, and the nerve-wracking move through the room with pouring sand and a bottomless pit!

Lothian has created an awesome adventure for young and old alike. I honestly can't wait to see where this time traveling trio will end up next! Bravo!!

Steven Stickler says

This debut from S.W. Lothian is a thoroughly delightful adventure story aimed at children in the 9-14 age range but also will be enjoyed by adults who, like me, occasionally find themselves frequenting the children's book section in search of the latest from Rick Riordan. With a tightly woven plot that moves at a fast pace, seemingly ordinary kids as the central characters facing extraordinary obstacles, a battle between the forces of good and evil, and an appropriate dose of twists and turns, this novel has all the classic elements of a first-rate adventure. Add encounters with glowing mummies, statues that come to life, overexcited camels, a talking cat, mazes and tunnels, Egyptian hieroglyphs, and an amulet with secret powers, and the story becomes a compelling and enjoyable read.

The story begins when JJ, the central character and a somewhat ordinary 12-year-old boy, visits a museum and ends up in a room full of Egyptian artifacts where he is presented with an important quest: travel back in time to ancient Egypt in search of the Golden Scarab, which is the only thing that can prevent the evil god Seth from gaining power and disrupting the fabric of time. This, of course, is a classic adventure set-up (something bad will happen, only the main character can stop it), but what I enjoy about the way it is presented here is that JJ has a choice. We get to experience him thinking about the risks of undertaking this quest and so, when he ultimately decides in favor of taking on the challenge (as we of course knew he would), we gain an understanding of his character. From this somewhat contemplative beginning, the plot accelerates as JJ, joined by a friend from his own time, travels back in time in pursuit of the Golden Scarab and encounters a series of obstacles, frustrations and at least one potentially heart-breaking event.

Throughout, the writing style is clear, confident, and concise, with descriptive passages that successfully evoke strong mental images and a subtly wry sense of humor laced into the occasional scene. There are also important lessons about courage and friendship. All are important, but really a book like this will rise or fall based on the action scenes; it is, after all, an action-adventure story. On that count, Lothian succeeds wonderfully and I recommend this book for those who enjoy action-adventure novels.

I should mention by way of disclaimer, that I am also a writer and have interacted online with this writer on several occasions. I have found him to be a quite personable and articulate--in fact, that is why I decided to read this particular book--but I can assure you that my review was not affected by this relationship (nor, it must be said, has any money changed hands between us).

Cthulhu Down My Chimney 2Night says

4 Stars

An immediate plunge into danger and distress gets the book off to a fine start, capturing readers' interests while we sit with heart in mouth, waiting for the outcome. Poetic imaging accompanies a rapidly-paced plot. The twelve-year-old protagonist, JJ Sterling, is an imaginative boy who spends quite a bit of time thinking about the world, and the Universe beyond; about those who lived centuries ago, and of leaving a legacy for the future. He's rather advanced in this for his age, perhaps, but it also foreshadows his eventual purpose in the novel. No one, least of all JJ, could have guessed that visiting his father, a Senior Curator at a Museum of History, would result in an encounter with an animated statue possessed by Anubis, Ancient Egyptian god of the Underworld--nor that JJ himself would be called upon to travel throughout time in order to combat the evil, world-dominating plans of the god Seth--and if JJ and his friends cannot succeed in halting Seth's intent, their own modern world will be engulfed in the evil of this Ancient Egyptian deity as well!

I really enjoyed the descriptive settings in this story, as the author demonstrated a fine poetic turn of voice, and this brought the locales to vivid life for me. Author Lothian skillfully introduces much information about Egyptian history, theology, hieroglyphics, and culture, so that readers absorb new data while enjoying the story.

The author states in his dedication that this book was written for his children, and it reads to me much like listening to a father reciting a story at bedtime. It has that kind of warm and cozy feeling. It would be well suited as a story read to children at bedtime, or read to them to encourage both reading, and an interest in history.

Brenda says

JJ who was 12 years old, had just started school holidays, and with his little sister Grace, and their Mum, they went to visit their Dad, who was in charge of the Museum in town. Wandering off, he found himself in the Ancient Egyptian section. Fascinated, suddenly he was in a room which held an Egyptian mummy, and two really big statues. The following day, he was back again, on his own this time, and his Dad just told him to take care...

When one of the statues started talking to him, he couldn't believe his ears, or his eyes! The Egyptian god Anubis told him of the evil god Seth, who was trying to control Egypt, and Anubis wanted JJ to go on a quest to find the Sacred Scarab, and save Egypt from Seth...He was to choose a companion, and let Anubis know if they were willing to help the gods in the quest. So JJ contacted his friend Linc, who was very excited...definitely keen for an adventure.

The following day, Linc and JJ floated away from the Museum in a vivid blue light, and arrived in Ancient Egypt with another young person arriving at the same time, Rani, who was from another country, but joining them in the quest.

So began their adventure, travelling through Egypt to find the Golden Scarab, encountering various enemies along the way. Seth had helpers to find and conquer the three young heroes, but they also had allies on their side. The courage they showed, along with teamwork, and determination against the odds (and there were many) was gratifying.

I thoroughly enjoyed this beautifully written adventure novel for young people. The action was fast paced,

and in places extremely gripping. The interesting facts about Ancient Egypt and mythology were fascinating, and extremely enjoyable. I'm very much looking for the next novel in the series about JJ, Linc and Rani.

Highly recommended.

Midu Hadi says

this review is for an older version of the book

I got this book for free, in exchange of an honest review, from Making Connections. Get your copy [here](#).

What I liked about it:

it is a good book for pre-teens because it read like a written version of the movie, The Mummy.

the story isn't overly long

Mau is the cutest

enjoyed the information included about different Egyptian deities

What I didn't like:

stuff that bothered me but probably wouldn't bother a 12yo, like:

the kids getting used to the powers real quickly,

how did everyone understand each other-were they speaking the same language?

JJ sounded like a grown up in many scenes.

book needs editing

Also reviewed at:

Amazon

B&N

Heather Boustead says

Quest One:

The Golden Scarab

By S.W. Lothian

Twelve year old JJ Sterling has been enlisted by Horus to retrieve the Golden Scarab for him so he may be able to defeat his evil brother Seth. Thrust back in time to Ancient Egypt JJ must travel through a dangerous tomb and dodge Seth's minions at every turn. Will JJ be able to complete his mission and return back to

modern day London in one piece?

This was a great “Early Young Adult” novel. The author did a wonderful job in bringing Egyptian mythology to life and weaving it into a story that is fascinating and full of action and adventure. Even if you don’t know much about the Egyptian Gods S.W. Lothian does a fantastic job in explaining them without losing the readers interest. As soon as JJ and his best friend travel back to Ancient Egypt this book turns into nonstop action keeping you on the edge of your seat wondering what will happen next. The book is only about two hundred pages long, which is perfect for young readers or those who are just beginning.

As always if you have any requests or recommendations email me at:

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