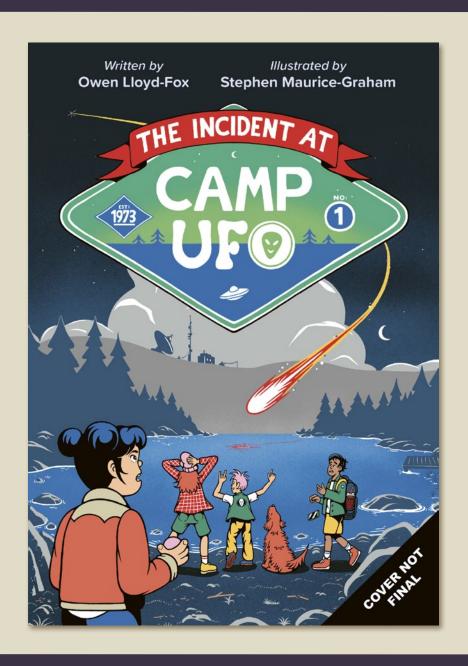


## DK - LBF/BBF24 - middle grade and graphic novels

## The Incident at Camp UFO

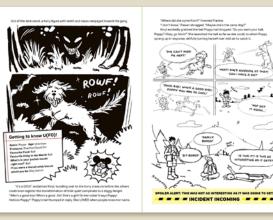


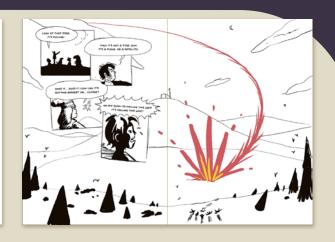
Unravel cryptic clues, solve fiendish puzzles, avoid the Shini-ta aliens at all costs and help the gang uncover the incident at Camp UFO!

- A brand-new adventure puzzle book series complete with graphic novel style illustrations. Perfect for fans of Bunny vs. Monkey, Stranger Things and gaming enthusiasts. A must-have for reluctant readers.
- Featuring a strong cast of characters with authentic stories from diverse backgrounds, including South and South East Asia, plus a non-binary character with partial hearing loss.

## The Incident at Camp UFO





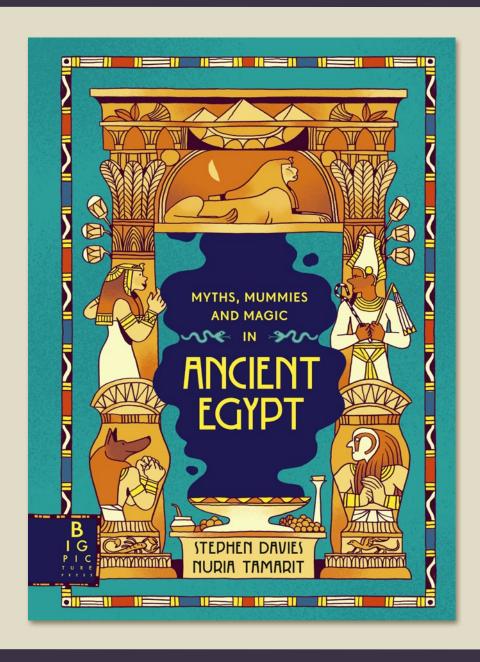






Pub Date	07/08/2025
Pub Price	£7.99
ISBN	9781800788725
$H \times W$	210 × 148mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Owen Lloyd-Fox
Illustrator	<b>Stephen Maurice</b>
	Graham
Extent	112pp
Word Count	15000 words
Translation Files	25/11/2024
	20/11/2021
Files To Printer	17/03/2025
Files To Printer Freight On	
	17/03/2025

## Myths, Mummies and Magic in Ancient Egypt



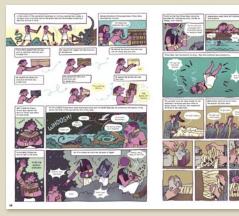
# A vivid and contemporary retelling of the ancient Egyptian myths.

- Contents: Myths The Creation Myth; Isis and Osiris; The Contendings of Horus and Seth; The Book of Toth; Prince Thutmose and the Sphinx; The Famine Stela; Cleopatra. Theme spreads - What are the Egyptian Myths?; Meet the Egyptian Gods; How the Myths Explained the World; Meet the Pharaohs; Mythical Creatures and Deadly Beasts; Mummification; Hieroglyphics; A Mythic Map of Ancient Egypt.
- Following on from the success of Myths, Monsters and Mayhem in Ancient Greece (which has sold over 35,000 copies worldwide as of July 2022)- this is the next title in a growing series for Big Picture Press

## Myths, Mummies and Magic in Ancient Egypt





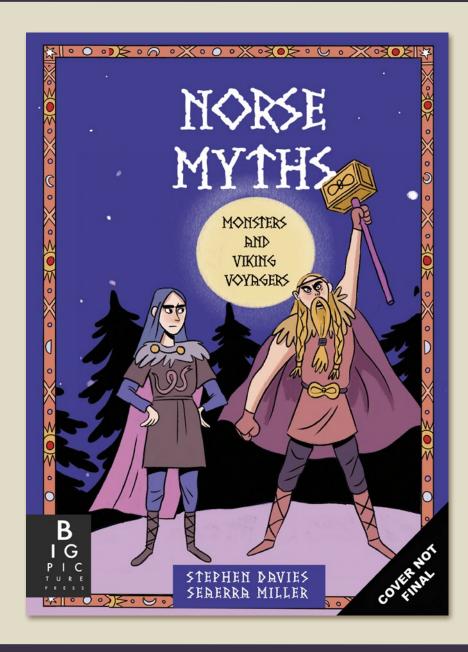






Pub Date	06/07/2023
Pub Price	£14.99
ISBN	9781800783232
$H \times W$	297 × 216mm
Binding	Hardback
Age Range	7-9 years
Author	Stephen Davies
	<b>Stephen Davies</b>
Illustrator	Nria Tamarit
Extent	64рр
Word Count	12000 words
Rights Available	World

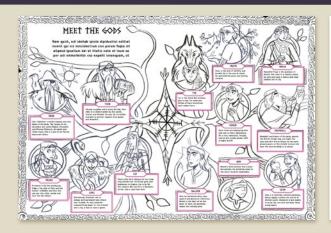
## Norse Myths, Monsters and Viking Voyages



## A vivid retelling of the Norse myths.

- Contents: Myths The Creation Myth;
   The Theft of Idun's Apples; Treasures of
   the Gods; Thor's Journey to Utgard; The
   Deal of Balder; Ragnarok; Sigurd and
   Fafnir Theme spreads What are the
   Norse Myths?; Meet the Norse Gods;
   How the Myths Explained the World;
   Meet the Vikings; Mythical Creatures
   and Deadly Beasts; The Afterlife; How
   the Norse Myths Came to us; A Mythic
   Map
- Following on from the success of Myths, Monsters and Mayhem in Ancient Greece (which has sold over 35,000 copies worldwide as of July 2022) - this is the next title in a growing series for Big Picture Press.
- These myths will be broken up with a series of 'theme' spreads, which will take a broader look at certain aspects of Norse mythology (mythical beasts and monsters, the gods etc.)

## Norse Myths, Monsters and Viking Voyages



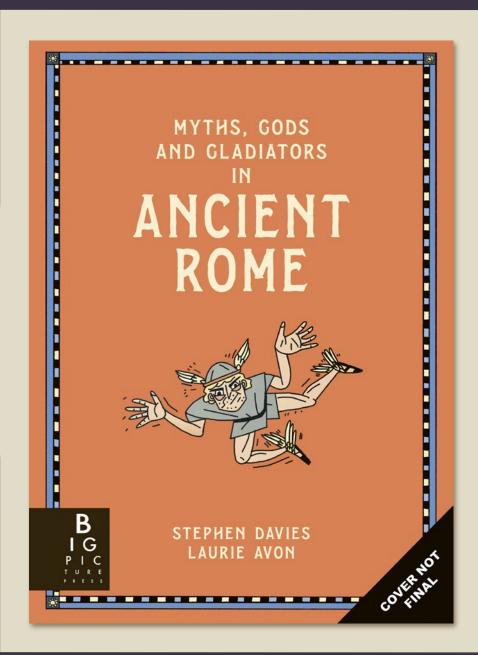






Pub Date	01/05/2025
Pub Price	£14.99
ISBN	9781800786745
$H \times W$	297 × 216mm
Binding	Hardback
Age Range	7-9 years
Author	Stephen Davies
Illustrator	Seaerra Miller
Extent	64рр
Word Count	12000 words
Files To Printer	09/12/2024
Freight On	27/02/2025
Board	
Rights Available	World

### Myths, Gods and Gladiators in Ancient Rome



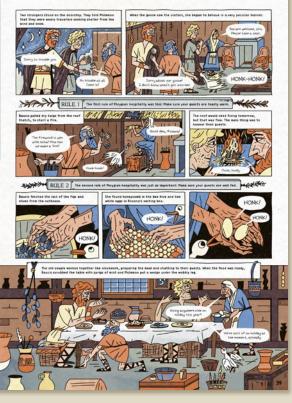
## A historical and humorous comic book retelling of the ancient Roman myths.

- Contents: Myths The Creation Myth;
   Dido and Aeneas; Romulus and Remus;
   Baucis and Philemon; Polyphemus and
   Ulysses; Boudicca's Army; Horatius at
   the Bridge. Theme Spreads What are
   the Roman Myths?; Meet the Roman
   Gods; How the Myths Explained the
   World; The Emperor Hall of Fame; Roman
   Life; Roman Religion; Roman Army;
   Colosseums and Gladiators; A Mythic
   Map of Ancient Rome.
- These myths will be broken up with a series of 'theme' spreads, which will take a broader look at certain aspects of Roman mythology (mythical beasts and monsters, the gods, heroes etc.)

## Myths, Gods and Gladiators in Ancient Rome

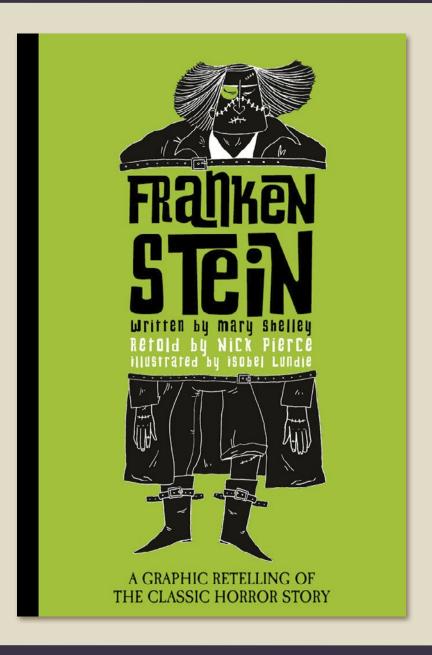






Pub Date	07/08/2025
Pub Price	£14.99
ISBN	9781800788770
$H \times W$	297 × 216mm
Binding	Hardback
Age Range	7-9 years
Author	<b>Stephen Davies</b>
Illustrator	Laurie Avon
Extent	64рр
Word Count	12000 words
Translation Files	25/11/2024
Files To Printer	17/03/2025
Freight On	05/06/2025
Board	
Rights Available	World

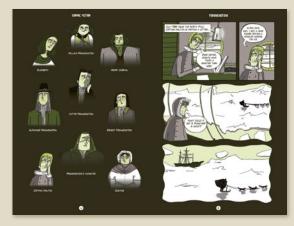
## **Frankenstein**



## A graphic retelling of Mary Shelley's gothic masterpiece

- A contemporary twist on a 19th Century classic. This creepy graphic retelling is the perfect tool for engaging reluctant readers and introducing children to the literary canon.
- An excellent English Literature curriculum companion. The endmatter contains an educational author biography, history of the text and key theme analysis to further help children.
- A wonderful introduction to the horror genre. Young readers will be captivated by Isobel Lundie's beautiful, spooky illustrations.
- Utilises speech bubbles and easy-tofollow sequential ordering to make the story more accessible.
- Next title in the series: Dracula

## Frankenstein



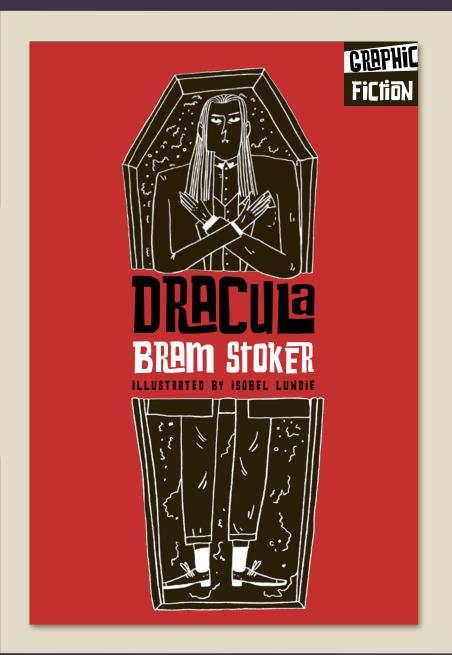






Pub Date	12/09/2024
Pub Price	£7.99
ISBN	9781800788800
$H \times W$	210 × 140mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Mary Shelley
Illustrator	Isobel Lundie
Extent	64рр
Word Count	<b>4316 words</b>
Files To Printer	15/04/2024
Freight On	11/07/2024
Board	
Rights Available	World

## Dracula



Bram Stoker's legendary gothic masterpiece is bought back to life in this blood-sucking graphic retelling!

- A contemporary twist on a 19th Century classic. This creepy graphic retelling is the perfect tool for engaging reluctant readers and introducing children to the literary canon.
- An excellent English Literature curriculum companion. The endmatter contains an educational author biography, history of the text and key theme analysis to further help children.
- A wonderful introduction to the horror genre. Young readers will be captivated by Isobel Lundie's beautiful, spooky illustrations.

## Dracula





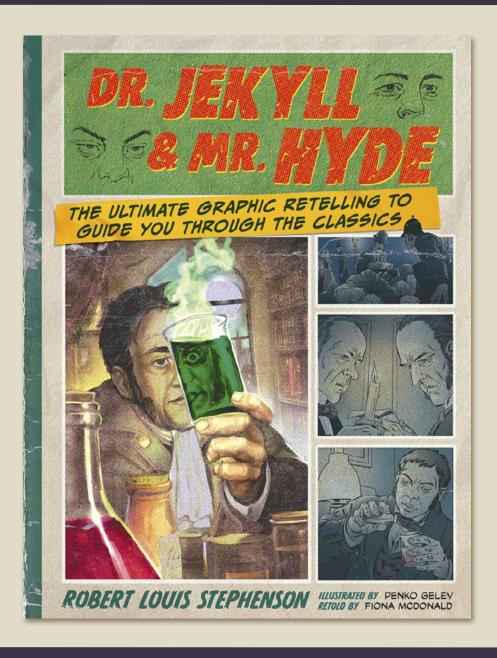






Pub Date	12/09/2024
Pub Price	£7.99
ISBN	9781800788817
H×W	210 × 140mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Bram Stoker
Illustrator	Isobel Lundie
Extent	64pp
Word Count	3140 words
Translation Files	29/01/2024
Files To Printer	22/04/2024
Freight On	27/06/2024
Board	
Rights Available	World

## Classic Comics: Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde



The ultimate comic book companion to guide you through the Victorian classic, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* 

- The highly visual nature of comic book storytelling is the perfect way to encourage reluctant readers who are challenged or intimidated by reading to improve their literacy skills.
- Small amounts of text and easy-to-follow sequential ordering of the picture strips help make Shakespeare more accessible.
- Perfect curriculum companion to students studying Jekyll and Hyde at school, with an additional glossary to help dissect any tricky jargon or Victorian terms.

## Classic Comics: Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde



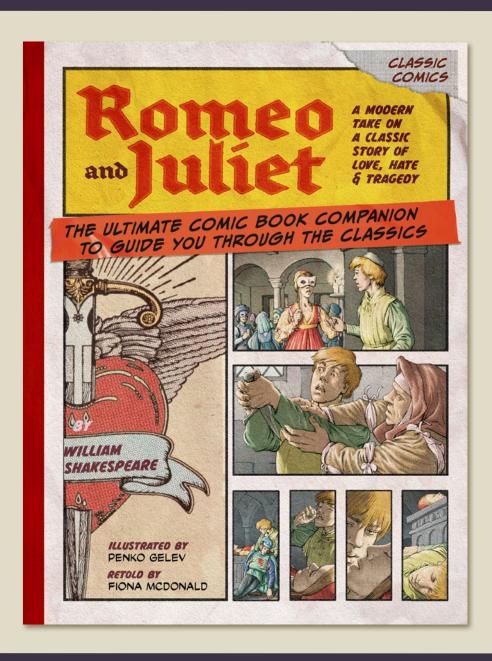






Pub Date	26/09/2024
Pub Price	£7.99
ISBN	9781800789142
$H \times W$	246 × 189mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Fiona
	MacDonald
Illustrator	Penko Gelev
Extent	48pp
Word Count	<b>5715 words</b>
Freight On	17/07/2024
Board	
Rights Available	World

## Classic Comics: Romeo and Juliet



The ultimate comic book companion to guide you through Shakespeare's classic, *Romeo and Juliet.* 

- The highly visual nature of comic book storytelling is the perfect way to encourage reluctant readers who are challenged or intimidated by reading to improve their literacy skills.
- Small amounts of text and easy-to-follow sequential ordering of the picture strips help make Shakespeare accessible.
- Perfect curriculum companion to students studying Romeo and Juliet at school, with an additional glossary to help dissect any tricky jargon or oldfashioned terms.

## Classic Comics: Romeo and Juliet





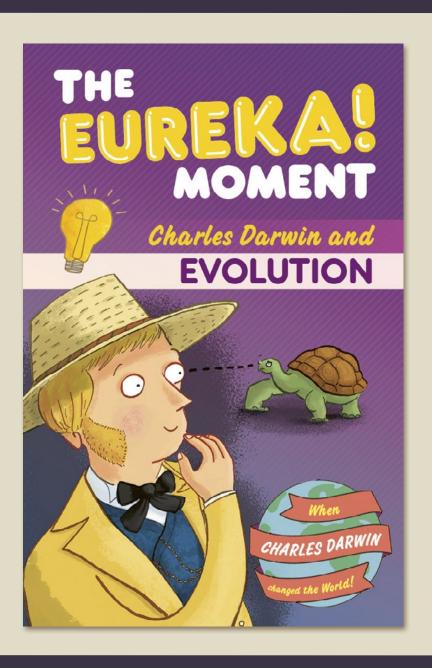






Pub Date	26/09/2024
Pub Price	£7.99
ISBN	9781800789159
$H \times W$	246 × 189mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Fiona
	MacDonald
Illustrator	Penko Gelev
Extent	48pp
Word Count	13401 words
Files To Printer	29/04/2024
Freight On	17/07/2024
Board	
Rights Available	World

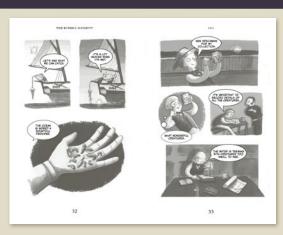
## The Eureka! Moment: Evolution

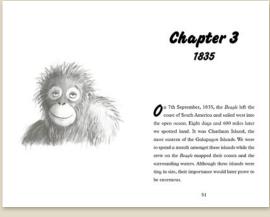


## Explore Charles Darwin's incredible 'Eureka' moment!

- Child-friendly narrative non-fiction curated to deepen children's knowledge of key moments in the history of science in an accessible, entertaining way.
- Short comic strips scattered throughout the narrative to help children visualise and engage with key events.
- This series introduces children to a myriad of inspirational individuals and the barriers they faced during their quest for knowledge, encouraging and inspiring young people to dare to think differently.
- Combines history and STEM focused learning. The perfect curriculum companion to children studying evolution, adaptation, animal biology, and survival of the fittest.
- Includes extra end matter, such as timeline and glossary, to help children to fully understand concepts and the historical context.

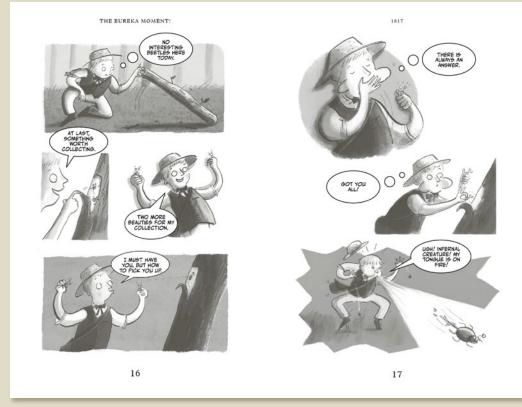
## The Eureka! Moment: Evolution





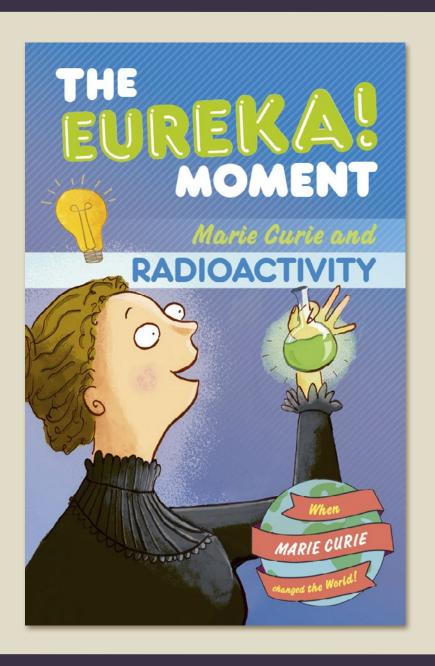






Pub Date	29/02/2024
Pub Price	£5.99
ISBN	9781800788473
$H \times W$	198 × 129mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Ian Graham
Illustrator	Annaliese
	Stoney
Extent	144рр
Word Count	15936 words
Rights Available	World

## The Eureka! Moment: Radioactivity



## Explore Marie Curie's incredible 'Eureka' moment!

- Child-friendly narrative non-fiction curated to deepen children's knowledge of key moments in the history of science in an accessible, entertaining manner.
- This series introduces children to a myriad of inspirational individuals and the barriers they faced during their quest for knowledge, encouraging and empowering young ones to follow their own research.
- Blends history and STEM-focused learning. The perfect curriculum companion, especially on the themes of radioactivity, medicine and scientific advances during WW1.
- Includes extra end matter, such as a timeline and glossary, to help children fully understand concepts and historical context.

## The Eureka! Moment: Radioactivity



about it. They all thought that I must have made an error somewhere in my work. They looked down their noses at me and told me to do my experiments again and be more careful this time But I knew I hadn't got it wrong. There had to be another reason for these unexpected results. When seemed obvious. The extra radiation must be had seen before. I was sure it was there and I had

When I told Pierre, he agreed with me. He was so excited at the possibility of discovering a new element that he stopped his own research and came to work with me. We crushed some pitchblende to powder, heated it and mixed it with water, acids and other chemicals to divide it up into the different materials it contained. We finally produced a tiny sample, just a few grains of radioactive material. When I tested it, I wrote

the result in my notebook. It was so surprising that I underlined it. I could scarcely believe it. Later, I read it out to Pierre, "150 times more active than uranium." I'd done it. I'd found a Pierre said, "You discovered it, so you can

#### Pitchblende

Pitchblende is a natural material that contains uranium and thorium. A piece of rock that is all made of the same is called a mineral. And minerals that contain valuable substances like uranium are called ores. Today, pitchblende is

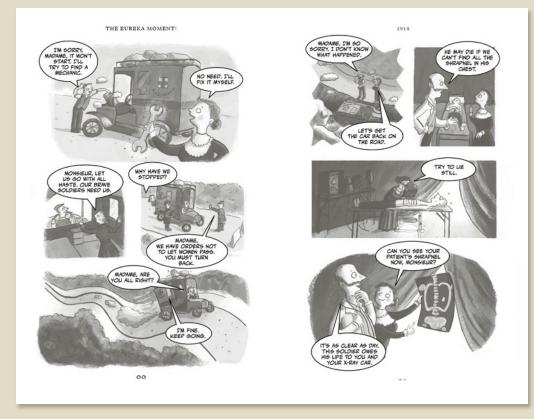


## Chapter 5



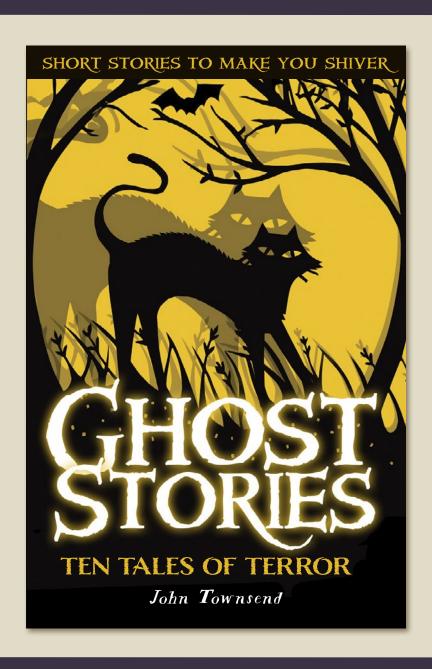
As 1914 began, I was bringing up my two seautiful daughters, Irène and Eve, on my own. My husband, Pierre, had died in a road accident eight years earlier. Life went on, but I was very unhappy. He was in my thoughts all the time and I missed him dreadfullu.

The Sorbonne asked me to take Pierre's place. I became the first woman professor there and head of research in the science department. I taught Pierre's science classes and also carried



Pub Date	29/02/2024
Pub Price	£5.99
ISBN	9781800788527
$H \times W$	198 × 129mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Ian Graham
Illustrator	Annaliese
	Stoney
Extent	144рр
Word Count	14683 words
Rights Available	World

## **Ghost Stories**



## Ten spooky spinetingling short stories!

- An entertaining, child-friendly introduction to ghost stories and the conventions of the horror genre. Perfect for children studying this in English.
- Shortlisted for the Leicester Libraries
   Our Best Book Award 2020.
- Kids will feel chills and thrills as they read about such things as haunted houses that burst into flames, ghosts frightening and friendly, a skull that won't stay buried, and a terrifying clown.
- A spooky halloween gift.

## **Ghost Stories**

#### SHIVER

off his hiking boots. He fell onto the grass with a groan. "I never want to go on a hike again. Never. They said the Bronace Award expedition would be a piece of cake. I'm dying for a piece of cake right now. My feet are killing me. I give up where are we?"

Sacha gulped from her water bottle. She sank to her knees, sitting on her mud-caked boots. "I haven't got a clue. Right now, I don't care."

Liam bit into a mini Mars Bar then handed her the rest. "Make the most of this last bite. No more left after this."

Sacha passed him the bottle, "Just a few sips. There's hardly any left."

Clouds cast deepening shadows over the hills.

A large bird of prey rose in the sky and soared above the moor.

"This map doesn't make sense. I'm sure we turned left at the church in the village." Liam traced his finger over the map. "It doesn't agree GHOST STORIES

with my phone, either. The GPS is useless.

The signal's no good out here in the middle of nowhere. It keeps cutting out."

"My battery's virtually given up the ghost. Just like me," Sacha nighed before adding wearily," I think we should go back. We know there's a pub a few miles back. I'd kill for a plate of hot chips." She looked up. "There's a huge bird up there. It must be a vulture waiting for us to die of thirst."

Liam turned the map round. "Unless that clump of trees is this bit of green on the map and on my phone." He swore when he lost the signal

Sacha laughed. "Let's face it, you haven't got a clue."

He kept looking at the map. "There's a red triangle thing marked here. It's a youth hostel. We can't be far off. Let's go there. Hostels are cheap. It's only a couple of miles."

Sacha got to her feet. "If you say so. It'll be

#### SHIVERS

dark soon." She stared up at the circling bird with a growing sense of doom, as Liam put on his rucksack with a renewed burst of enthusiasm. "We'll be in the dry before the ruin starts."

They linked arms and began walking towards the setting sun – towards the bird of prey and the dead of night.

The first drops of rain began to fall as Sacha pulled on the hood of her raincoat.

"How much further, Liam? My blisters say it's bed time."

"Not far. I'll be able to tell when we get to

"Not far. I'll be able to tell when we get to the top of this hill. We'll see down into the next valley. I should get a better phone signal up there."

Sacha snorted. "It'll be dark by the time we get to the top."

Thunder clouds blotted out the rising moon and rolled across the moor as a shriek filled the darkening sky. Liam and Sacha stopped to look CHOST STORIES

up. A black shape swooped over their heads.

"Scary!" Sacha frowned. "That bird is like an omen. An angel of doom!"

Their boots somethed through mud. "Not.

long." Lam called: "Well soon be at the top."
A flash of lightning snaked across the sky and a loud crack rambbed over the moor. "It's like something from a horror movie," Sucha panated. The rain swept across in silvery sequals. At the top of the hill Liam pointed into the next valley. "That must be the hostel. Down there. With the

"I don't like the look of it," Sucha nurmured.
"It won't take us long." Liam sold, ignoring
her. The air was now very still. As they walked
down towards the hostel, a strange silence fell.
There was no rain here and everything was
deathly still – apart from a bird hovering above
the smoke that rose towards the pale moon
peoping through parting clouds.

#### SHIVERS

A sign by a set of black iron gates said Youth Hostel. Members Only'. Just beyond stood a stark Gothic mansion surrounded by bent and twisted tree trunks.

Apart from a faint glow from one of the large upstairs windows, the house was in eerie darkness.

"I told you we'd find it," Liam said, smiling. Sacha wasn't so sure. "It doesn't look very nice," she said.

Liam ignored her and added, "Tve got cash. They'll let us stay the night."

Clanging through the gats, they walked along the path, up some crumbling steps and to the porch. A pair of bosts caked in dried mod lay on the top step, Liam slammed his fist on the beavy door and a holler that deshoot before the doer swung open. A dimly lit hallway with dark ook panels stretched in front of them. The smell of soot driftled out over the porch. A thin, best man

#### GHOST STORIES

in black stood in front of them. He had a hooked nose and small beady eyes. "Yes? What is it?" he croaked. His eyes stared like a bird's.

"Can we stay the night?" Liam said. "I can pay with a card or cash."

The man blinked. The light from a single bulb cast his shadow over the front steps. He had a shadow like a vulture's.

"Members only," he said. "You'll have to join."

"How much?"

"We've got rules," the man continued, not listening, "No matches. No paraffin. No time." Sacha squeezed Liam's hand. She could smell

drink on the man's breath.

"Are you the warden?" Liam asked

The man ignored him. "It's late. It's only because of the clocks I can bend the rules tonight. We're full. One of you will have to sleep in the attic. The other in the boiler room."

Sacha pulled a face. "I don't like the sound of

43

#### SHIVERS

if she'll appear. You see, you shared Cornerstone Cottage with Mrs Coombs. She can be quite unpredictable but at least you survived a full week. Some don't. Apparently, she was the dairy maid long ago... before she passed away while knitting in her rocking chair in the back room. All very mysterious. They say she was found with a row of insect bites in the shape of a letter C on her neck."

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#### GHOST STORIES



## WHEN THE CLOCK STOPS

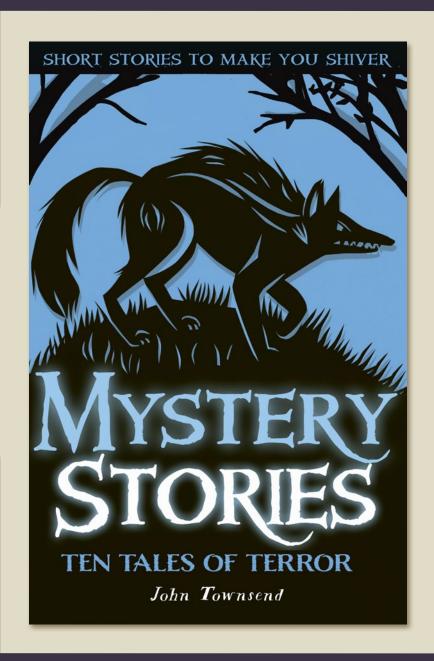
hen they wander from the expedition party, fifteen-year-olds Liam and Sacha are alone on the moors. Lost. At first, it's no big deal, as the map shows a hostel isn't too far away. But they haven't bargained on what is waiting in the darkness, and on what will happen on the night the clocks go back...

Liam threw down his rucksack and pulled

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Pub Date	01/04/2018
Pub Price	£6.99
ISBN	9781800788992
$H \times W$	198 × 129mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	7-9 years
Author	John Townsend
Illustrator	Isobel Lundie
Extent	128pp
Word Count	21744 words
Rights Available	World

## **Mystery Stories**



## Ten mysterious, spooky short stories

- A wonderful, entertaining introduction to the horror genre and short story writing, perfect for children studying this in English.
- Perfect spooky gift for children to read one story each night in the build up to Halloween.
- Encourages independent reading and exploration of new genres.

## **Mystery Stories**

#### SHIVER

In case you are wondering, Dei Gratia is Latin for 'by the grace of God'. She became a wellknown name, all because I told the captain what I'd seen that chilly December day.

There was a fair wind and the sea was choppy. although I'd known far worse. I was still finding my sea legs and was horribly sick when we first set sail in heavy seas. I always dreaded being told to climb the main mast to deliver a message to the lookout in the crow's nest. Up there you feel the swell far worse and have to cling on tight. Our ship had two masts, so it was called a brigantine. She was built in Canada only the year before, so we were both getting used to crossing the Atlantic. We were apparently 400 miles east of the Azores, some 500 miles from the coast of Portugal. The lookout pointed over to the horizon, but I happened to glance further to my left and saw a tiny speck in the far distance. 'Have you spotted that ship over there?' I

#### MYSTERY STORIES

asked. The lookout held a telescope to his eye.

That's mighty odd, 'be muttered. 'She seems to
be out of sorts, if you ask me. Go tell the captain.'

Captain Morehouse was concerned and he
ordered us to change course. He steered us
towards the ship, keeping a close eye on her

strange zigzagging through the waves.

'She's going all over the place. Whoever's at
the helm must have been on the rum all night.'

The closer we get to the 'drunken ship', as the captain called her, the more alarmed he became. He called to Mr Derwau, the first mate: That ship is definitely adrift. There's nothing guiding her and she's at its of keeling over line one sets her a proper course. Lower the rowing beat and investigate. Take the second mate and the boy and tell me what you find.'

I gingerly climbed down into the boat and we rowed across to the swaying ship, drawing up alongside. John Wright, the second mate, SHIVERS



#### MYSTERY STORIES

#### MYSTERY FACTS

Did you know ..

I. During an attempt to fly around the world in 1937, American aviator Amelia Eurhant disappeared somewhere over the Pacific Ocean. The wreckage of her aircraft was never found, and her disappearance remains one of the big unsolved mysteries of the 20th century. Before her disappearance, Amelia Eurhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

2. The search to find the Yeti can be traced back to the time of Alexander the Great, who in 328 BC set out to conquer the Indus Valley and demanded to see a Yeti for himself. Local people were unable to belo The name 'Abominable.

SHIVERS

Gimlin in the Bluff Creek region of northern California. Despite much investigation since that footage from 1967, it is still uncertain where this was a boox or a genuine sighting. Take a look at it online and decide for yourself —if you dare!

#### MYSTERY STORIES

#### GLOSSARY

Bermuda Triangle an area in the Atlantic Ocean between Bermuda, Puerto Rico and Florida where ships and planes have apparently disappeared mysteriously.

Chupacabra a creature of legend said to live in parts of the Americas, with the first sightings reported in Puerto Rico. The name comes from its reputation for drinking the blood of goats.

Cryptozoology the study of creatures, such as the Chupacabra, the existence of which has not been scientifically proved.

Dire wolf an extinct wolf that was widespread in North America up to about 12,000 years ago, having a larger body and a smaller brain than today's wolf

#### SHIVERS

her, too - but Miss said we should relax as it was only the cruise boat chugging and making waves.'

He frowned and looked at his watch. 'Not now. Not in the fog it wasn't. Boats don't sail in bad weather. They've all been moored for the past hour. No boats were out on the loch when you heard that noise.' He looked very serious, lowered his voice and added, 'The only one brave enough to venture into those dark and misty waters would be the very monster itself.'

Mrs Milligan could only gulp and stare. Apart from that, she still seemed fairly relaxed. So relaxed, she didn't stir. That's because she'd just fainted with a terrified gasp — face down in the man's porridge.

MYSTERY STORIES



#### THE GHOST SHIP

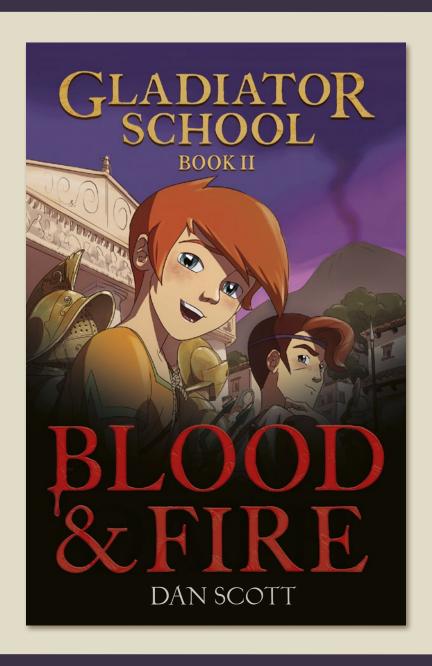
was only 12 at the time. It was my first voyage as cabin boy on the ship *Dei Gratia* in 1872. In fact, it was me who first spotted flapping sails in the distance and reported the drifting vessel to Captain Morehouse. Little did we know what we were about to find.

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Pub Date 01/11/2020 **Pub Price** £7.99 **ISBN** 9781800789005 H×W 198 × 129mm **Paperback** Binding Age Range 7-9 years **John Townsend** Author **Isobel Lundie** Illustrator 128pp Extent Rights Available World

10

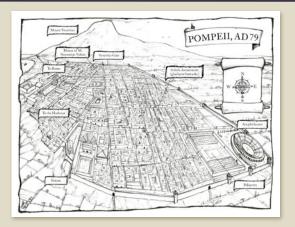
## Gladiator School 2: Blood & Fire



# The second in the Gladiator School series - an epic ancient tale of blood, sweat and sacrifice.

- An epic fictional story set in a real-life historical context. Perfect for lovers of the ancient world or those studying the Ancient Romans in school.
- Fast-paced, action-packed and full of unexpected twists and turns. A great option for reluctant readers searching for an exciting, gory adventure story to keep them entertained.
- Contains additional notes throughout to define key Roman terms, helping children to learn more about ancient society and immerse themselves in the time period.

## Gladiator School 2: Blood & Fire



### CHAPTER I



he midday sun beat down on Lucius as he pursued Quin through the streets of Poupeit. He glisupsed his browler's tall, athletic figure up alsoed, sumering along through the reach heading west towards the Forum. Eucius could have perferred to walk side by side with Quin hrough this unlassifier city, but season the would not

see werekunen.

Sincells of cooking meat from the fast-food shops mingded with the strench walking over from the fullsasce factories must be harbour. Lecius's cars either sasce factories must be harbour. Lecius's cars exclude with the cries of fruit sellers and wine merchants and the pipes and drums of bankers. The noise and "Formattle main modelplan which was developting to binarios meetings."

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#### GLADIATOR SCHOOL

spalser reminded him of Suberra, the area where he more lived in Rous. Yet Dunqu's several to carey an exter air of unexace. The shadow-filled allays, the hard forces of the young men, the cold-eyed state of a begar woman – they all spelled danger to Lexins. Maybe it was his insignation, but Pomper is essent like a city brisinning with desperate and unerrapulson people whole many the contract of the contract of

From a searly side street, Lorius heart a cryo opin, Hin natured carries made him wast to knery on past, but these he was Quin true and enter the hely. Hockandy, Lorius followed, Adding the ring on his forefringer for luck, It was his only memerics of his father, and had become his sideman. Concerling himself behind a pile of amphones. Lorius was Quin himself behind a pile of amphones. Lorius was Quin was the least of the control of the father and he become his sideman. Concerling himself behind a pile of amphones. Lorius was present perior gas on palicing around a lad of shout their own ago. From him mans, formad tops, now be-spattered with mult. Lorius could tell the victims was a young man of status, though this did not seven to count for much among his terrorisotres.

emplores (ringeler amplore); earthere are storage jass.

6

BLOOD & FIRE

His sense of fairness clearly offended, Quin impulsively strode into the mêlée and pushed aside one of the bulkes, who had been holding the viceius in a neck lock. The bully squeaked in surprise and fell to the ground. His friends immediately closed in around

the ground. His friends immediately closed in around Quin, their jeers turning to under ol or larger. There were six of them -three around with which against the unsured Quin. Localing prounds He steeled binnell, knowing he would have to go and help his brother. With his shedor bulk, Locaius waarn's made for physical violence. He cursed their fate for bringing then here to Pomprii.

0

It was ten days since Crasson, the laminta of the gladlaster whole had made the amount encount. The whole had had had the the amount encount. The whole had had had been described the proposed Boars at the forthcasing games in Possporii. As toul of thirty gladiators would be gains, including godin, and Larish and been disusport to learn that be too was among those selected to go, it was a seven-day waren't to Possporii, and the result of the Storfers work spect in the city. Taking the return march into account, and the result of the forther work spect in the city. Taking the store man and the store would be good from Boars for three whole works - time he had been buying to be partial was sent in the proposed from the first own mortings for his father. What I August a considerable who was a sent of the sound of the first had once and the sent of the sound of the sent of t

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#### THE MAIN CHARACTERS

Lucius, a Roman boy

Quintus, his older brother

Aquila, their father

Ravilla, their uncle

Caecilia, their mother

Valeria, their sister

Isidora, Lucius's friend, an Egyptian slave

Crassus, a lanista (trainer of gladiators)

Valens, editor (sponsor) of the games at Pompeii

Atia, a seer

Eprius, a young patrician (nobleman) of Pompeii PROLOGUE

#### FIRST BLOOD

ROME 10 August AD 79





ames given by Gaius Valerius Ravilla,' Lucius read aloud. 'Forty gladiators will fight. Perfumed water will be scattered.' His finger hovered over his brother's name.

'Quintus, Retiarius, tiro, will battle Burbo, Secutor.\* Burbo has won ten bouts.'

'You've read it at least twenty times,' said Isidora, sounding rather impatient. 'You can't change the words by staring at them, you know.'

Lucius dropped the programme back into his bag and rubbed his eyes. He hadn't had much sleep.

Retiarius: a gladiator who fights with net (rete) and trident; tiro: a gladiator fighting in public for the first time. Secutor: a gladiator who wears an enclosed, egg-shaped belimet and fights with a short sword (gladius); bis name means Chaser.

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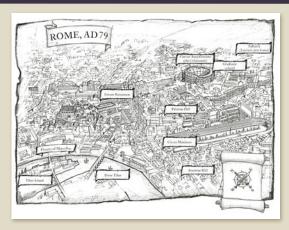
## Gladiator School 1: Blood Oath



## A tale of blood, sweat, sand and sacrifice, set in the gladiator arenas of Ancient Rome

- An epic fictional story set in a historical context, perfect for lovers of the ancient world.
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## Gladiator School 1: Blood Oath



Lucion's older brother had found electy to sa Lucius's older brother had found plenty to say. Quintus, named after his father, was never lost for words. He had followed the soldiers through the villa as they searched for his father, warning them of the dire punishments that would fall on their heads when his father returned, threatening them with curses and finally invoking the household gods to protect the family against the introders.

family against the intruders.

But, throughout it all. Lucius had stayed in the atrium, his back pressed against the cool marble walls. The statues were still wearing their crowns of flowers and leaves. Less than a day had passed since they had celebrated their mother's birthshay. And sow his world was crumbling around his ears. 'Where is he, boy?'

A soldier was standing in front of him, demanding

an answer.

'The Senate?' snapped Quintus from the doorway to the atrium. 'The Forum?' Where else would you expect one of Rome's most respected senators to be at this time of day?

'He's not there,' Lucius said. His voice sounded croaky and unfassiliar. 'What are you talking about?' asked Quin.

okstylaer of ancient Rose, which was also the place for

He sounded irritable and indignant. How favory, thought Lucius. Quin always knows everything. How com

'Explain yourself,' rapped out the soldier, who was

Esplain yourself, rapped out the soldier, who was evidently losing parience fast. Look, said Lucius. Finally, Quin followed the direction of his brother's gaze and his eyes fell on the altar. Lucius saw Quin's posture change. His shoulders sagged, his face egistered confusion and disbelief.

The dog's gone," he said. Of the three statues that re-Of the three statues that represented their household gods, the wooden dog had always been their father's favourite. It had stood on the hearth altar for as long as Lucius could remember. Aquils had said that it represented the faithfulness of true friends. He would or take the statue on a normal working day. But it would always travel with him when he made a

The's taken the statue?' demanded the soldier.

Lucius nodded. The soldier's mouth set into a grim line. 'Right,'

He called his men and ordered them to his side. You're going? Quin asked.
Yes,' said the soldier. We'll leave you to your

'What's that supposed to mean?' Quin had recovered from his initial shock and was truculent again.

be many weeks - perhaps mouths - of this alread

Quin had always seemed strong and powerful. But Quin had always seemed strong and powerful. But more, standing barefoot is the middle of the areas, wearing nothing but a loineleth, he looked like a child. Blood and weart were smeared across his back and shoulders. Other novicii gladiators were watching from the side steps, and Lucius had ventured out of the back.

rooms of the school to see how Quin was getting on. Now he wished that he hadn't bothered. No sword, no shield, no armour, 'he muttered, 'It's

a voice behind him. The weapons come later.'
Lucius spun around and sure a slave girl standing
there. Her thick, black hair hung in two heavy plaits there. Her thirk, black har hing in two heavy plans around her oval face. Locin ddn't know what to say. A month ago he world have smiled and thanked her. He would have known his own status. Now, working in the glodiator school, he ddn't even feel like hisself any more. He certainly didn't feel like talking. He turned back to the arena, where Onin was on his back again

back to the areas, where Quas was on his back again.
One of the watching gladitators normed to Lucius.
His lips parted in a black-toothed grin.
Your brother's not even out of his swaddling clothes, he said, spitting onto the sand. We eat his sort for breakfast.

Clearly this gludiator was already trained and fighting for enougy. Lacius dish't answer best, as lee heard another cay of pain from Quin. his threat bearned. He would be eick if he leeft on waterling. He had no got out. Lacklily, he had an excuse to leaver his mack had asked him to deliver a message to someone in the Forum.

The sweltering streets of Rome seemed less busy than smal. Lucius wove his way towards the Forum, the cries of street sellers ringing in his ears as he dared through the throug of carts and chariots. The acid smell of urine and excrement stung his threat. He stumbled

over a litter of piglets trotting across his path and the owner yelled at him: 'Out of the way, boy!'

sever yelled at him: Out of the way, boy? Sevey: Lackin memment, seconding to the side of the street, where a next versible who was selling piles of fresh red hours was splatning severyone in the scienty with blood, supporting most assertion to ble crasses. and most. He shows the streeties to ble crasses and the crass the same and most. He shows the streeties was blist hair into was all into the result while he leader. But now the reduction that he was standing on the street where their old hours. As the shows the street where their old hours are the same than and they give the same cloths and clay part of silver oil an abunyla-tic was clothen and clay part of silver oil and shops. Excepting blood for an is held been in the old theys.



#### THE MAIN CHARACTERS

Lucius, a Roman boy

Ouintus, his older brother

Aquila, their father

Ravilla, their uncle

Caecilia, their mother

Valeria, their sister

Isidora, Lucius's friend, a slave

Rufus, a slave

Crassus, a trainer of gladiators

**PROLOGUE** 

### TRAITOR!

JULY AD 79





ucius stared at the household gods.

Everyone else seemed able to shout and cry and wail and rage, but Lucius couldn't even open his mouth. From the moment the soldiers had

burst in to arrest his father and found him missing, Lucius's eyes had been glued to the little wooden

The soldiers had stormed through the villa, overturning furniture, rattling their swords and yelling, 'We arrest you, Quintus Valerius Aquila; in the name of the Emperor, show yourself!'

His mother had collapsed, trembling, onto the couch in the atrium,\* clasping Lucius's sister Valeria

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<sup>\*</sup> atrium: the entrance ball of a Roman villa.



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