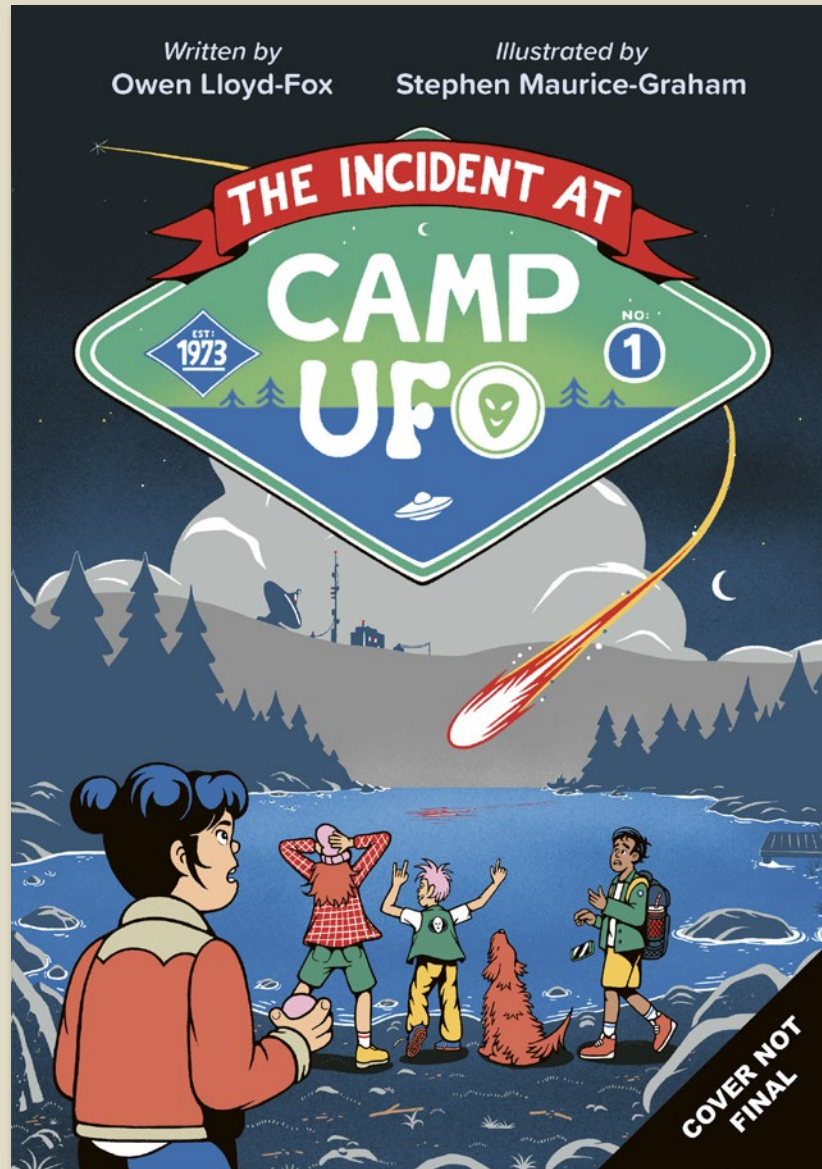




**Germany - FBF24 - middle grade  
and graphic novels**

# 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!**

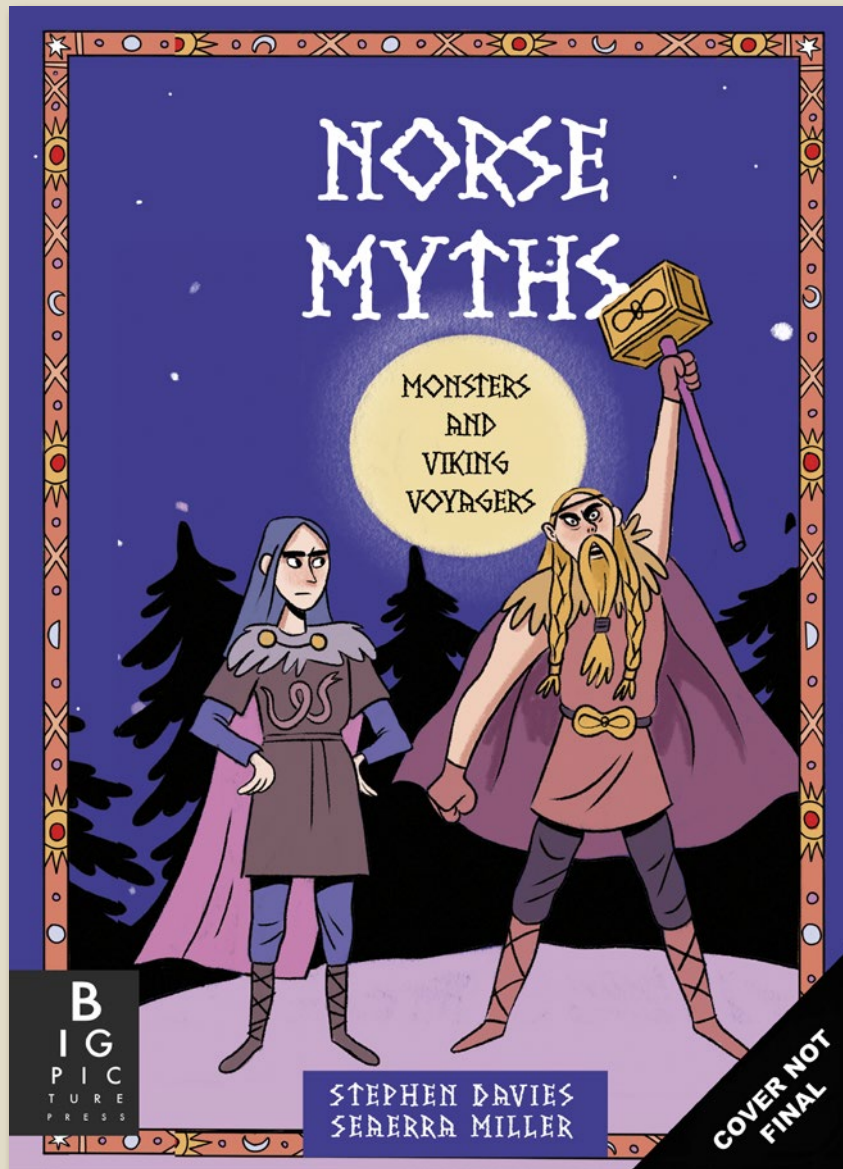
- A brand-new adventure puzzle book series complete with graphic novel style illustrations. Perfect for fans of Bunny vs. Monkey, Stranger Things and gaming enthusiasts. A must-have for reluctant readers.
- Featuring a strong cast of characters with authentic stories from diverse backgrounds, including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

# The Incident at Camp UFO



Pub Date	05/02/2026
Pub Price	£7.99
ISBN	9781800788725
H x W	210 x 148mm
Binding	Paperback
Age Range	9-11 years
Author	Owen Lloyd-Fox
Illustrator	Stephen Maurice Graham
Extent	112pp
Word Count	15000 words
Translation Files	26/05/2025
Files To Printer	15/09/2025
Freight On Board	04/12/2025
Rights Available	World

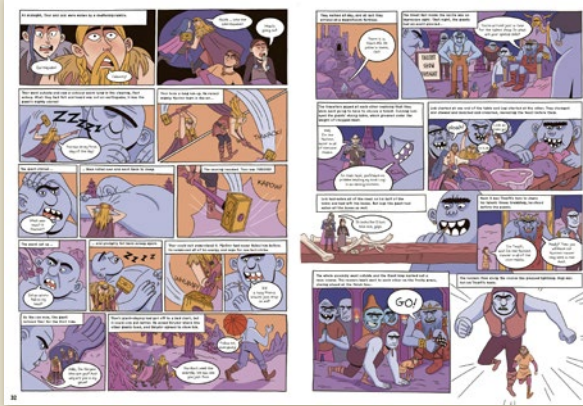
# Norse Myths, Monsters and Viking Voyages



## A vivid comic-strip retelling of the greatest Norse myths.

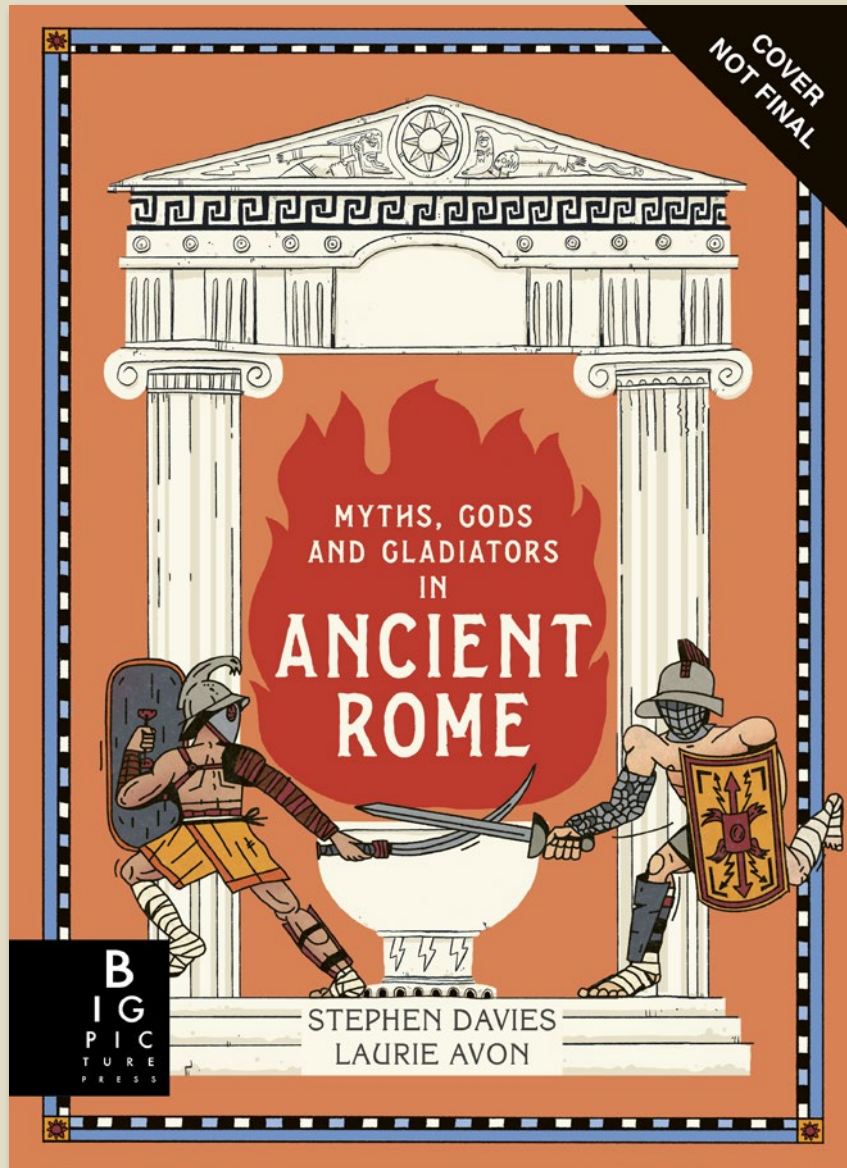
- Contents: Myths - The Creation Myth; The Theft of Idun's Apples; Treasures of the Gods; Thor's Journey to Utgard; The Deal of Balder; Ragnarok; Sigurd and Fafnir Theme spreads - What are the Norse Myths?; Meet the Norse Gods; How the Myths Explained the World; Meet the Vikings; Mythical Creatures and 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 50,000 copies worldwide as of July 2024) - this is the next title in a growing series for Big Picture Press.

# Norse Myths, Monsters and Viking Voyages



Pub Date	20/11/2025
Pub Price	£14.99
ISBN	9781800786745
H x W	297 x 216mm
Binding	Hardback
Age Range	7-9 years
Author	Stephen Davies
Illustrator	Seierra Miller
Extent	64pp
Word Count	12000 words
Translation Files	14/02/2025
Files To Printer	10/04/2025
Freight On Board	14/08/2025
Rights Available	World

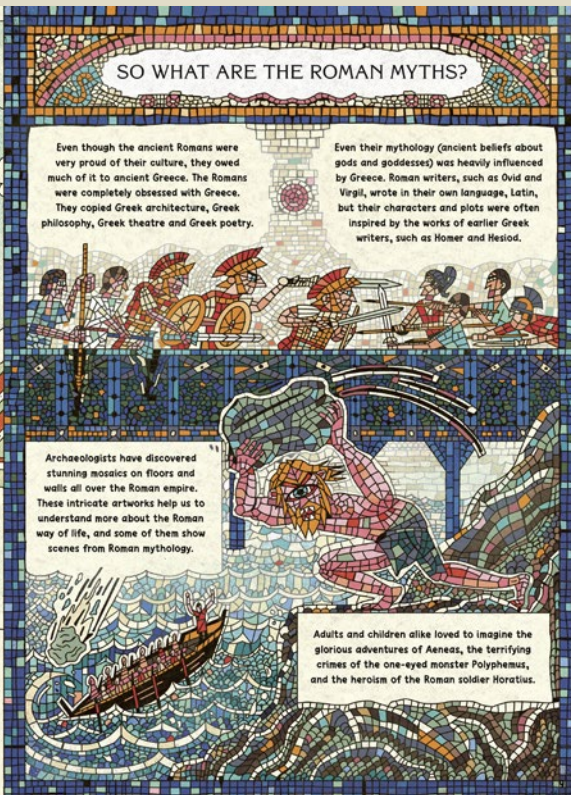
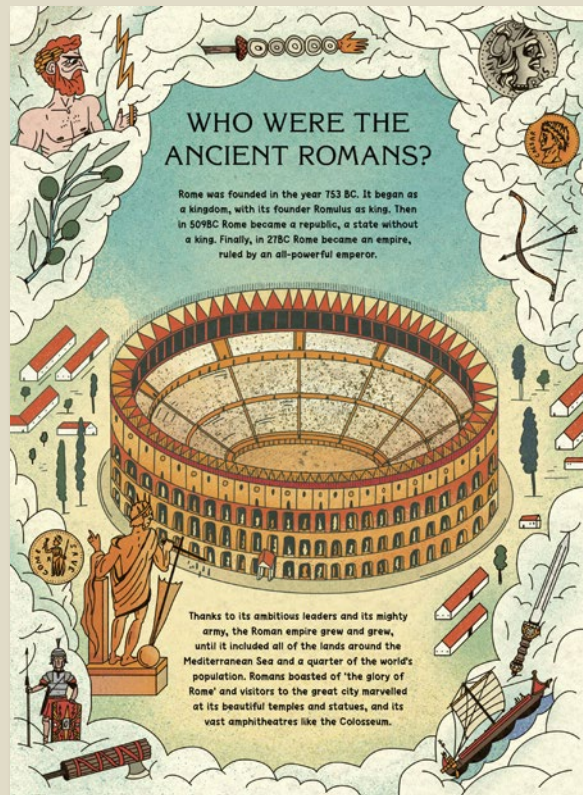
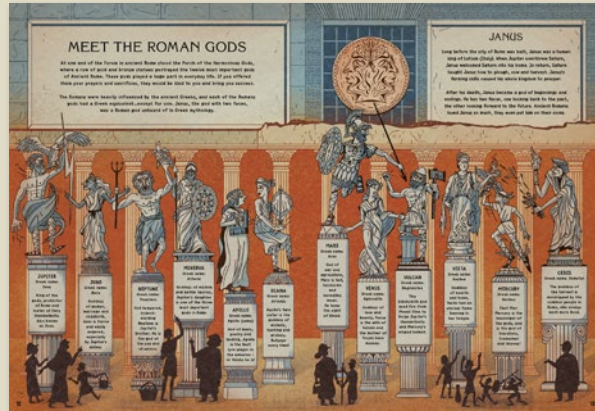
# Myths, Gods and Gladiators in Ancient Rome



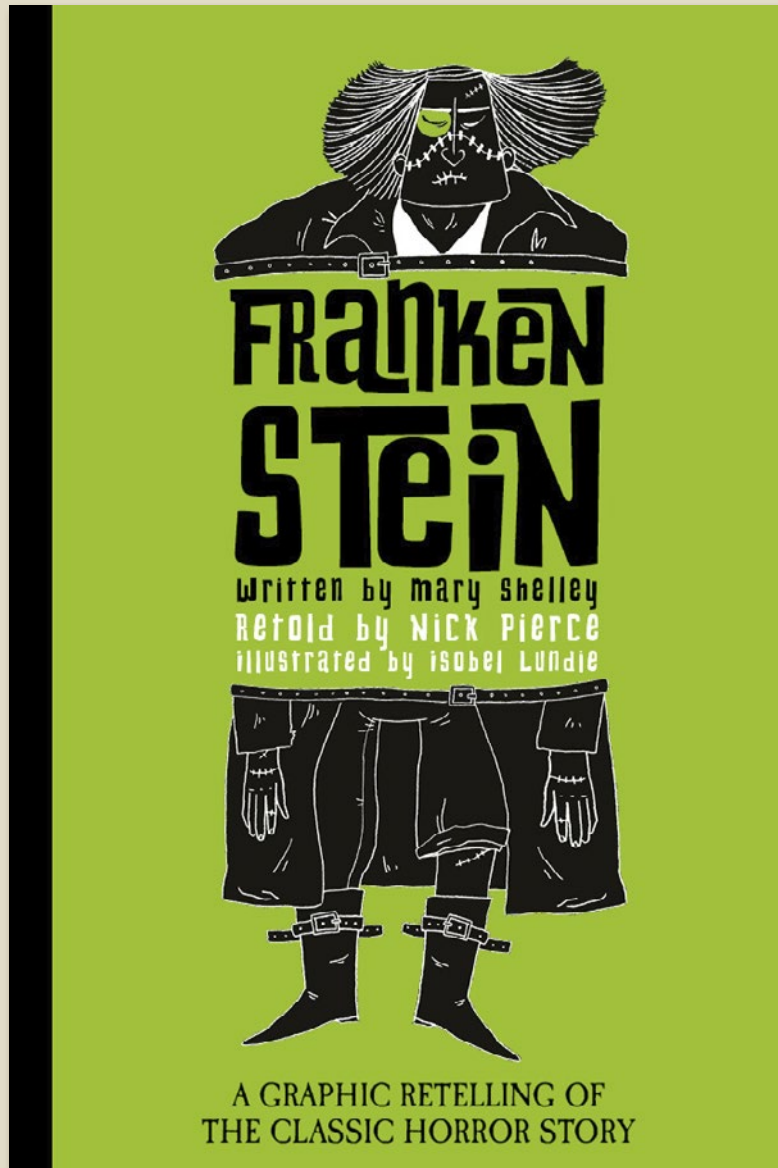
**A historical and humorous comic book retelling of the ancient Roman myths.**

- 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.)
- Following on from the success of *Myths, Monsters and Mayhem in Ancient Greece* (which has sold over 50,000 copies worldwide as of July 2024) - this is the next title in a growing series for Big Picture Press
- Growing demand for graphic novels and comic books for children and adults alike
- Cover treatments - deboss and pantone

# Myths, Gods and Gladiators in Ancient Rome



Pub Date	14/08/2025
Pub Price	£14.99
ISBN	9781800788770
H x W	297 x 216mm
Binding	Hardback
Age Range	7-9 years
Author	Stephen Davies
Illustrator	Laurie Avon
Extent	64pp
Word Count	12000 words
Translation Files	02/12/2024
Files To Printer	24/03/2025
Freight On Board	29/05/2025
Rights Available	World

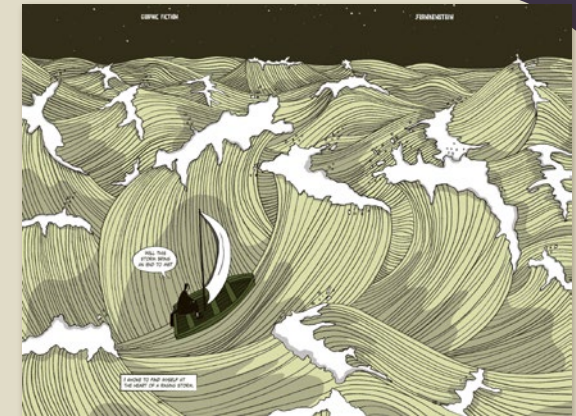
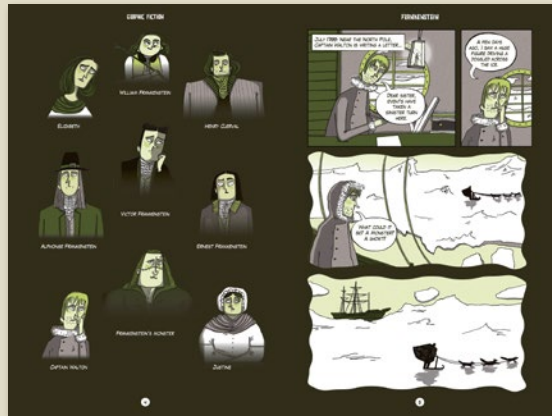


## A graphic retelling of Mary Shelley's gothic masterpiece

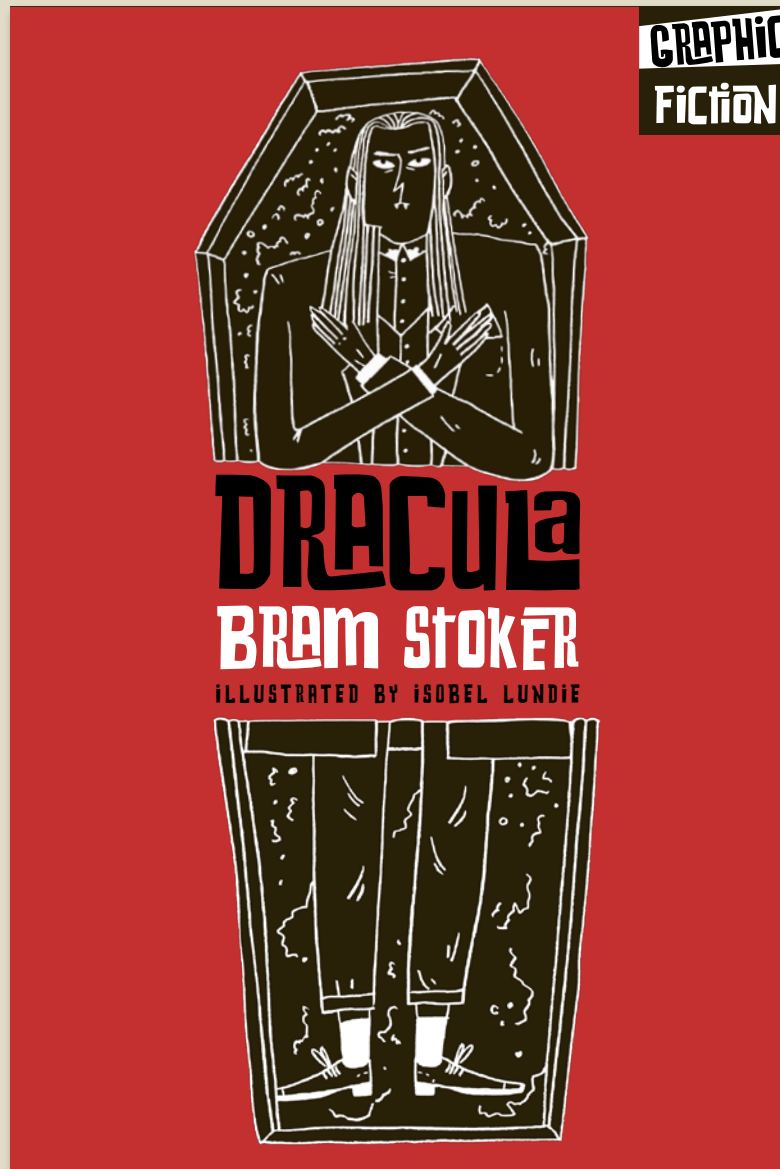
- A contemporary twist on a 19th Century classic. This creepy graphic retelling is the perfect tool for engaging reluctant readers and introducing children to the literary canon.
- An excellent English Literature curriculum companion. The endmatter contains an educational author biography, history of 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-to-follow sequential ordering to make the story more accessible.
- Next title in the series: Dracula



# Frankenstein



Pub Date	<b>12/09/2024</b>
Pub Price	<b>£7.99</b>
ISBN	<b>9781800788800</b>
H x W	<b>210 x 140mm</b>
Binding	<b>Paperback</b>
Age Range	<b>9-11 years</b>
Author	<b>Mary Shelley</b>
Illustrator	<b>Isobel Lundie</b>
Extent	<b>64pp</b>
Word Count	<b>4316 words</b>
Rights Available	<b>World</b>



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

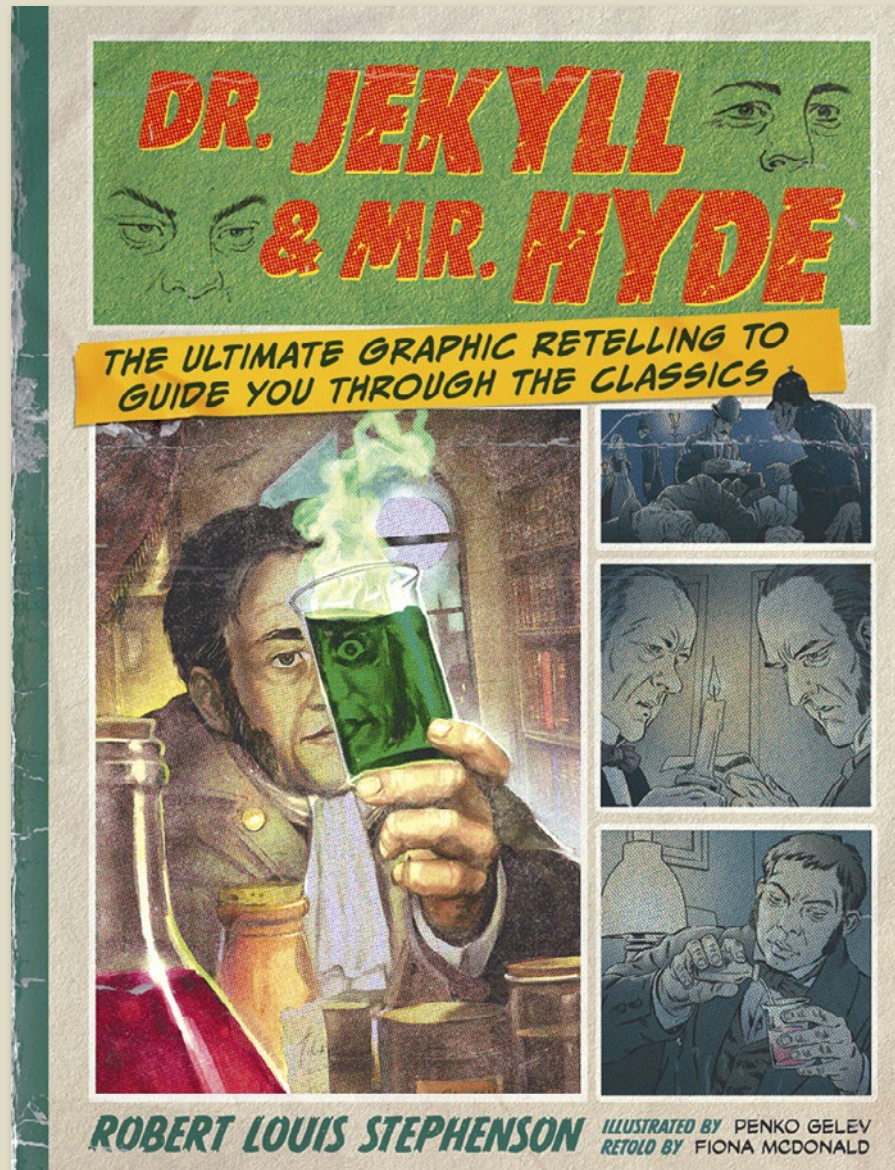
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- An excellent English Literature curriculum companion. The endmatter contains an educational author biography, history of the text and key theme analysis to further help children.
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# Dracula



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

# Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde: Classic Comics



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.

# Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde: Classic Comics

**A Visit to Dr Jekyll**



**A VISIT TO DR JEKYLL**

JEKYLL: I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT YOU LATELY, MR. HYDE. YOU'VE BEEN VERY QUIET SINCE WE LAST MET.

HYDE: I'VE BEEN VERY BUSY, DR. JEKYLL. I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A NEW FORMULA THAT WILL ALLOW ME TO TAKE FULL CONTROL OF MY OWN FATE.

JEKYLL: YOU'RE SPEAKING OF THAT CURIOUS SUBSTANCE THAT YOU'VE BEEN TAKING IN SECRET? THE ONE THAT CAUSED YOU TO BEHAVE SO... UNUSUALLY?

HYDE: THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN LIVE THE LIFE THAT I WANT TO LIVE. A LIFE OF FREEDOM AND PASSION.

JEKYLL: BUT AT WHAT COST? YOU'RE LOSING YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS. YOU'RE BECOMING A MONSTER.

HYDE: I'M BECOMING MYSELF. THE ONLY PERSON I TRULY AM.

JEKYLL: NO, YOU'RE BECOMING ANOTHER MAN. ONE WHO IS UNRECOGNIZABLE TO EVERYONE WHO KNOWS YOU.

HYDE: THAT'S THE POINT, DR. JEKYLL. I WANT TO BE UNRECOGNIZABLE.

JEKYLL: UNRECOGNIZABLE TO YOURSELF AS WELL? YOU'VE FORGOTTEN WHO YOU ARE?

HYDE: I'VE FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING BUT MYSELF. THE ONLY PERSON I TRULY AM.

JEKYLL: NO, YOU'RE BECOMING ANOTHER MAN. ONE WHO IS UNRECOGNIZABLE TO EVERYONE WHO KNOWS YOU.

HYDE: THAT'S THE POINT, DR. JEKYLL. I WANT TO BE UNRECOGNIZABLE.

**Dr. Jekyll Tells His Story**



**DR. JEKYLL TELLS HIS STORY**

JEKYLL: I'M THE DOCTOR WHO YOU KNOW. BUT I'VE HAD A SECRET FOR MANY YEARS NOW. A SECRET THAT HAS MADE ME THE RICHEST MAN IN LONDON.

HYDE: AND THAT SECRET IS...?

JEKYLL: IT'S THE SECRET OF MY OWN DUAL NATURE. I AM BOTH DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE.

HYDE: HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?

JEKYLL: IT'S A MATTER OF SCIENCE. I'VE DISCOVERED THAT THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO EVERY HUMAN BEING. THE GOOD SIDE AND THE EVIL SIDE.

HYDE: AND YOU'VE CHOSEN THE GOOD SIDE?

JEKYLL: I'VE CHOSEN THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS. I CAN ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF WEALTH AND POWER WITHOUT LOSING MY HUMANITY.

HYDE: BUT AT THE COST OF YOUR SOUL?

JEKYLL: I'VE MADE MY CHOICE, MR. HYDE. I'VE CHOSEN TO LIVE AS A MAN OF LETTERS AND A MAN OF BUSINESS.

HYDE: AND YOU'VE DONE VERY WELL AT THAT, DR. JEKYLL.

JEKYLL: YES, I HAVE. BUT I'VE ALSO FOUND THAT THERE IS SOMETHING MORE TO LIFE THAN MONEY AND POWER.

HYDE: AND THAT SOMETHING IS...?

JEKYLL: IT'S THE KNOWLEDGE THAT I AM BOTH DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE. AND THAT I HAVE CHOSEN THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS.

**SMILING SHOCKER**

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* for an urgent reason. To make money. He had been working as a professional editor since he was 23 years old, and his books had never passed. In 1885, aged 38, he set out on a quest for a new genre, one that would be as well as himself. He had a wife and a family, but he felt a need to express his inner self in a way that was not just a story, but a piece of art.

**CHRISTMAS HORROR**

The Christmas holiday was a time when many Victorian families tried to relax by their own fireside with an evening's reading. Stevenson spent the first half of his life there, as a child and as a young man. He was a member of the family and he had a deep understanding of the Christmas story. It was a time when the British tradition was to read a Christmas story to their children. Stevenson's Christmas story is a Christmas story that is as much a horror story as it is a Christmas story.

**FICTION FOR THE MASSES**

By the time Stevenson's Christmas story was published, new printing and picture technology, such as rotary press and steel engraving, made it cheap, cheap and easy to print reading matter in large quantities. This meant that books were now more available to the masses than ever before. Stevenson knew that he had to write a story that would be read, not just by the few who had the means to buy books, but by the masses who were now able to read.

**FACT AND FICTION**

Stevenson's Christmas story is a story that is both fact and fiction. It is a story that is both true and false. It is a story that is both a Christmas story and a horror story. It is a story that is both a Christmas story and a horror story.

**DR JEKYLL'S NAME**

Although Jekyll is an unusual name, it is a real English surname. The most famous Jekyll in real life was the poet laureate John Jekyll (1842-1922). Stevenson was a friend of his brother, the poet laureate John Jekyll. The name should have been pronounced 'JEEKEL', not 'JEKEL'.



**THE TRANSFORMATION**



THE REPULSIVE MAN ASKED DR LANTON FOR A MEASURING GLASS, THEN TOOK SOME WHITE POWDER AND RED LIQUID FROM THE DRAWER AND MIXED THEM TOGETHER.

SMILING BROADLY, HYDE TURNED TO DR LANTON.

And now my knowledge and power shall be laid open to you!

Behold!

HYDE GASPED, STAGGERED AND CLUNG ON TO THE TABLE, STARING WITH WILD EYES AND PANTING, OPEN-MOUTHED.

**1. enigma: riddles, mysteries.**

**THE TRANSFORMATION**



THEN HIS FACE SEEMED TO SWELL...

THE FEATURES SEEMED TO MELT AND CHANGE...

AND THERE BEFORE DR LANTON STOOD HENRY JEKYLL!

LANYON SAT SHAKING, SICKENED AND APPALLED, AS DR JEKYLL BEGAN TO EXPLAIN. EVERY WORD SEEMED LIKE A DEADLY BLOW, DESTROYING HIS MIND, HIS SOUL, HIS REASON. HIS WHOLE WORLD COLLAPSED AROUND HIM, LEAVING ONLY HORROR. HORROR, HORROR.

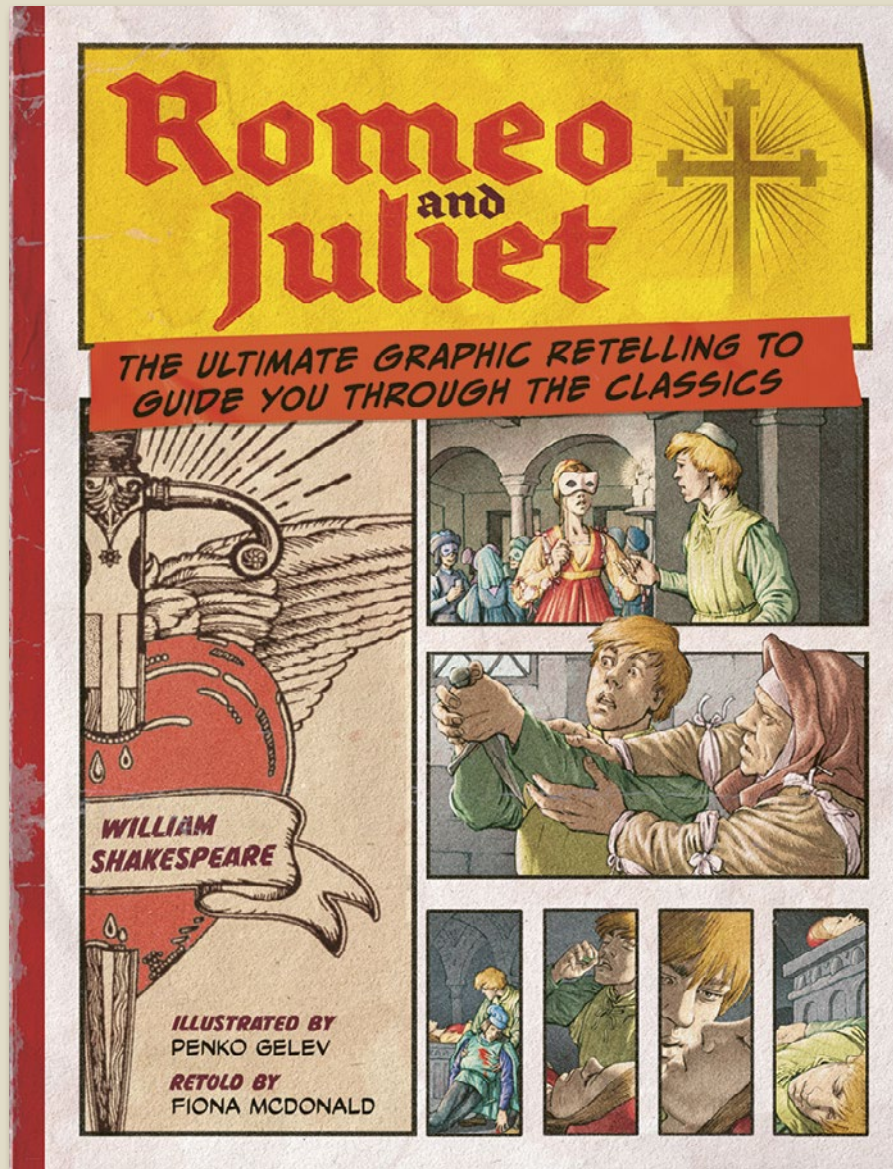
My life is shaken to its roots. I must die!

"I saw what I saw, I heard what I heard, and my soul sickened at it."

DR LANTON COULD NOT BRING HIMSELF TO WRITE DOWN ALL THE FOUL SECRETS DR JEKYLL TOLD HIM. BUT HE DID RECORD, IN HIS LETTER TO MR UTTERSON THAT DR JEKYLL CONFESSED TO BEING EDWARD HYDE - THE MURDERER OF SIR DANVERS CAREW.

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

# Romeo and Juliet: Classic Comics



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 old-fashioned terms.

# Romeo and Juliet: Classic Comics

### CHARACTERS

**ROMEO**  
**JULIET**  
**MERCUTIO**  
**TYBALT**  
**NURSE**  
**PARIS**  
**FRIAR LAURENCE**  
**LORD CAPULET**  
**LORD MONTAGUE**  
**TYBALT'S MOTHER**  
**TRIBULATION**  
**FRANCIS**  
**FRANCIS**  
**FRANCIS**  
**FRANCIS**  
**FRANCIS**

### TWO FAMILIES AT WAR

IN ROMEO'S TOWN, MONTAGUES AND CAPULETS ARE THE ONLY TWO MAIN FAMILIES. THE CAPULETS ARE AN OLD FAMILY OF WEALTHY MERCHANTS. THE MONTAGUES ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR HONOUR AND COURAGE. THE TWO FAMILIES HATE EACH OTHER BECAUSE OF AN OLD FEUD THAT BEGAN IN THE DAYS OF KING EDWARD III.

ONE DAY, TYBALT, JULIET'S COUSIN, CHALLENGES ROMEO TO A FIGHT. ROMEO REFUSES TO FIGHT BECAUSE HE IS A PEACE-LOVING PERSON. TYBALT IS ANGRY AND KILLS MERCUTIO, ROMEO'S FRIEND.

ROMEO IS SO UPSET THAT HE KILLS TYBALT. HIS FATHER, LORD MONTAGUE, IS VERY ANGRY AND DECIDES TO BANISH ROMEO FROM VERONA. ROMEO HAS TO LEAVE THE CITY AND GO TO EXILE IN VENICE.

IN VENICE, ROMEO MEETS JULIET, WHO IS ALSO IN EXILE BECAUSE SHE REFUSED TO MARRY PARIS, HER FATHER'S CHOICE. THEY FALL IN LOVE AND DECIDE TO GET MARRIED IN SECRET. BUT THEIR LOVE IS PUT TO A TEST BY TYBALT'S DEATH AND ROMEO'S BANISHMENT.

THEY GO TO THE CAPULET HOUSE TO GET MARRIED. BUT LORD CAPULET DOES NOT WANT THEM TO BE MARRIED. HE WANTS JULIET TO MARRY PARIS. ROMEO AND JULIET ARE FORCED TO FIND A WAY TO GET MARRIED WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE.

THEY GO TO THE CHURCH TO GET MARRIED. BUT LORD CAPULET FINDS THEM AND KILLS ROMEO. JULIET IS LEFT ALONE AND MUST FIND A WAY TO JOIN ROMEO IN EXILE.

THEY GO TO THE CHURCH TO GET MARRIED. BUT LORD CAPULET FINDS THEM AND KILLS ROMEO. JULIET IS LEFT ALONE AND MUST FIND A WAY TO JOIN ROMEO IN EXILE.

### THE LOVERS MEET

ROMEO AND JULIET MEET AT A MASKED BALL. ROMEO IS DRAWN TO JULIET BY HER BEAUTY AND HER NAME. THEY FALL IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

THEY MEET AGAIN IN A SECRET PLACE. ROMEO TALKS TO JULIET ABOUT HIS FEELINGS FOR HER. JULIET TELLS HIM ABOUT HER FATHER'S PLAN TO MARRY HER TO PARIS.

ROMEO DECIDES TO HELP JULIET ESCAPE HER FATHER'S PLAN. HE GOES TO THE CHURCH TO GET MARRIED TO JULIET IN SECRET.

THEY GO TO THE CHURCH TO GET MARRIED. BUT LORD CAPULET FINDS THEM AND KILLS ROMEO. JULIET IS LEFT ALONE AND MUST FIND A WAY TO JOIN ROMEO IN EXILE.

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### ROMEO AND JULIET

TO WRITE HIS TRAGEDY, SHAKESPEARE USED THE STORY OF ROMEO AND JULIET. THE PLAY WAS FIRST PERFORMED IN 1597. IT WAS WRITTEN DOWN FROM MEMORY BY THOSE OF THE ACTORS WHO HAD PERFORMED THE PLAY. A MUCH MORE ACCURATE VERSION WAS PUBLISHED TWO YEARS LATER IN 1599.

THESE TWO VERSIONS WERE PRINTED IN QUARTO, THREE BOOKS THAT WERE MADE UP OF SHEETS OF PAPER. THE FIRST VERSION WAS PRINTED IN 1597. THE SECOND VERSION WAS PRINTED IN 1616. THE SECOND VERSION WAS SUPERIOR TO THE FIRST BECAUSE IT HAD MORE CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

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### FRIAR LAURENCE'S PLAN

JULIET HURRIES TO SEE FRIAR LAURENCE. NOT KNOWING THAT PARIS IS VISITING THE FRIAR TO ARRANGE THEIR MARRIAGE, BUT THE FRIAR IS TRYING TO DELAY THE CEREMONY, KNOWING FULL WELL HE HAS ALREADY MARRIED JULIET TO ROMEO.

PARIS EXPLAINS THAT JULIET'S FATHER IS KEEN TO SPEED UP THE MARRIAGE AS HE IS WORRIED THAT JULIET IS SO UPSET AT TYBALT'S DEATH.

JULIET WANTS TO TALK TO THE FRIAR ABOUT ROMEO BUT CAN'T SAY A THING WITH PARIS THERE. PARIS IS EAGER TO TALK ABOUT JULIET'S MARRIAGE TO ROMEO.

FINALLY, TO GET RID OF PARIS, JULIET PRETENDS SHE HAS COME TO MAKE HER CONFESSION. PARIS LEAVES SO SHE CAN BE ALONE WITH THE FRIAR.

THE FRIAR TRIES TO LOOK PLEASED FOR PARIS, BUT IS SECRETLY WORRIED ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN LORD CAPULET FINDS OUT ABOUT JULIET'S MARRIAGE TO ROMEO.

AT THAT MOMENT, JULIET APPEARS, LOOKING FLUSTERED. PARIS IS DELIGHTED THAT SHE HAS TURNED UP, THINKING IT A HAPPY COINCIDENCE.

JULIET, ON THURSDAY, WILL ROUSE'VE.

TILL THEN, ADIEU, AND KEEP THIS HOLY KISS.

JULIET TAKES THE VIAL. THE FRIAR WARNS HER THE POTION IS NOT FOR THE FAINT-HEARTED.

THE FRIAR PROMISES THAT HE WILL SEND A MESSENGER TO ROMEO SO THAT HE WILL KNOW THE PLAN.

JULIET THANKS HIM AND LEAVES, CLUTCHING THE POTION IN HER HAND.

### FRIAR LAURENCE'S PLAN

ONCE PARIS HAS GONE, JULIET BURSTS INTO TEARS.

JULIET IS SO UPSET THAT SHE THREATENS TO KILL HERSELF WITH A DAGGER.

THE FRIAR CALMS JULIET DOWN AND TAKES THE KNIFE FROM HER.

THE FRIAR REVEALS HIS PLAN: THE NIGHT BEFORE HER WEDDING TO PARIS, SHE MUST SWALLOW A POTION THAT WILL MAKE HER LOOK DEAD.

WHEN PARIS FINDS HER EVERYONE WILL THINK SHE'S DEAD AND SHE'LL BE BURIED IN THE FAMILY VAULT.

WHEN THE POTION WEARS OFF, THE FRIAR AND ROMEO WILL BE WAITING. THEN JULIET AND ROMEO CAN LEAVE VERONA AND START A NEW LIFE.

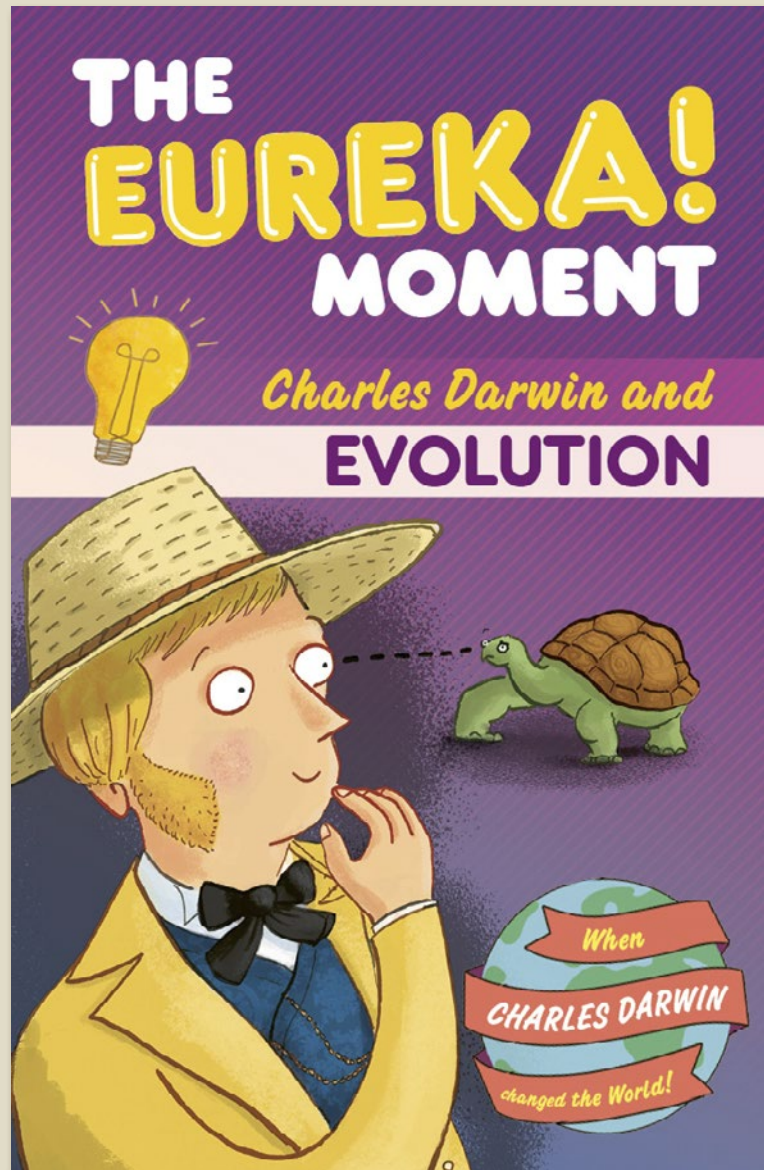
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Author	Fiona MacDonald
Illustrator	Penko Gelev
Extent	48pp
Word Count	13401 words
Freight On Board	17/07/2024
Rights Available	World

# Evolution: The Eureka! Moment

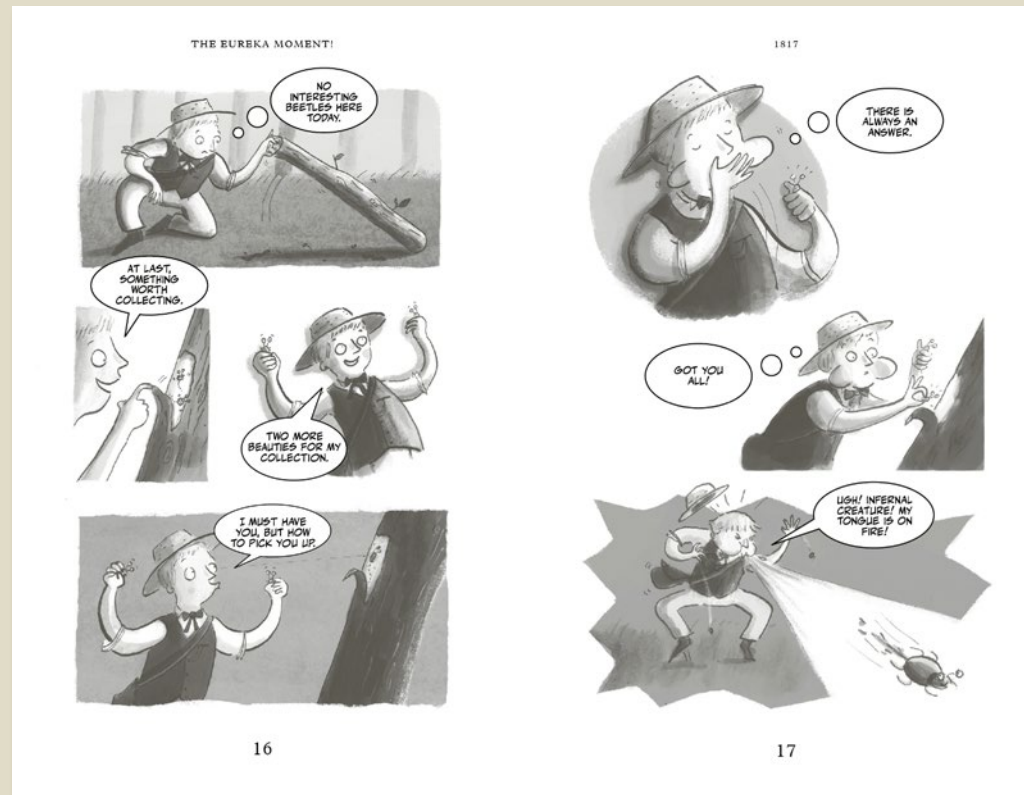
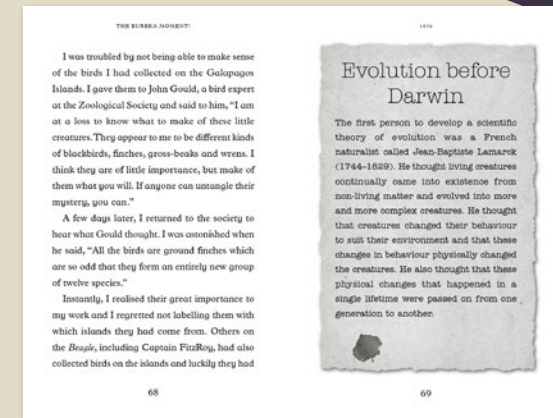
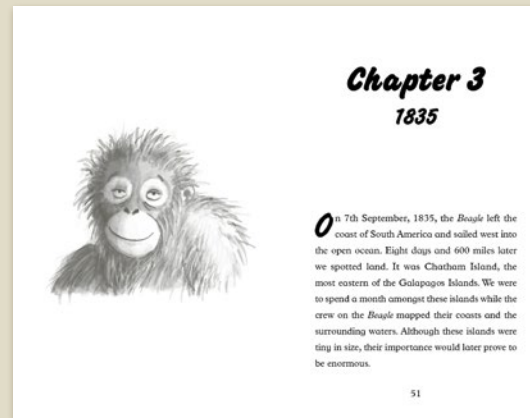
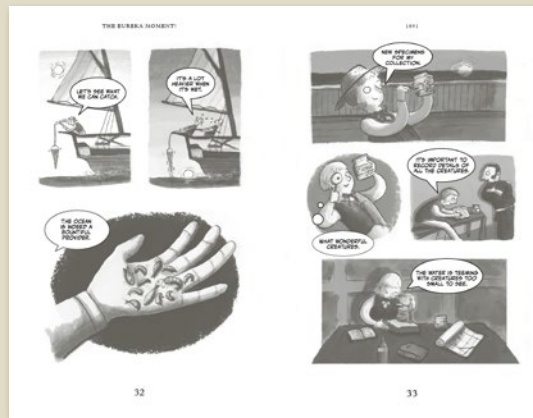


## Explore Charles Darwin's incredible 'Eureka' moment!

- 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.

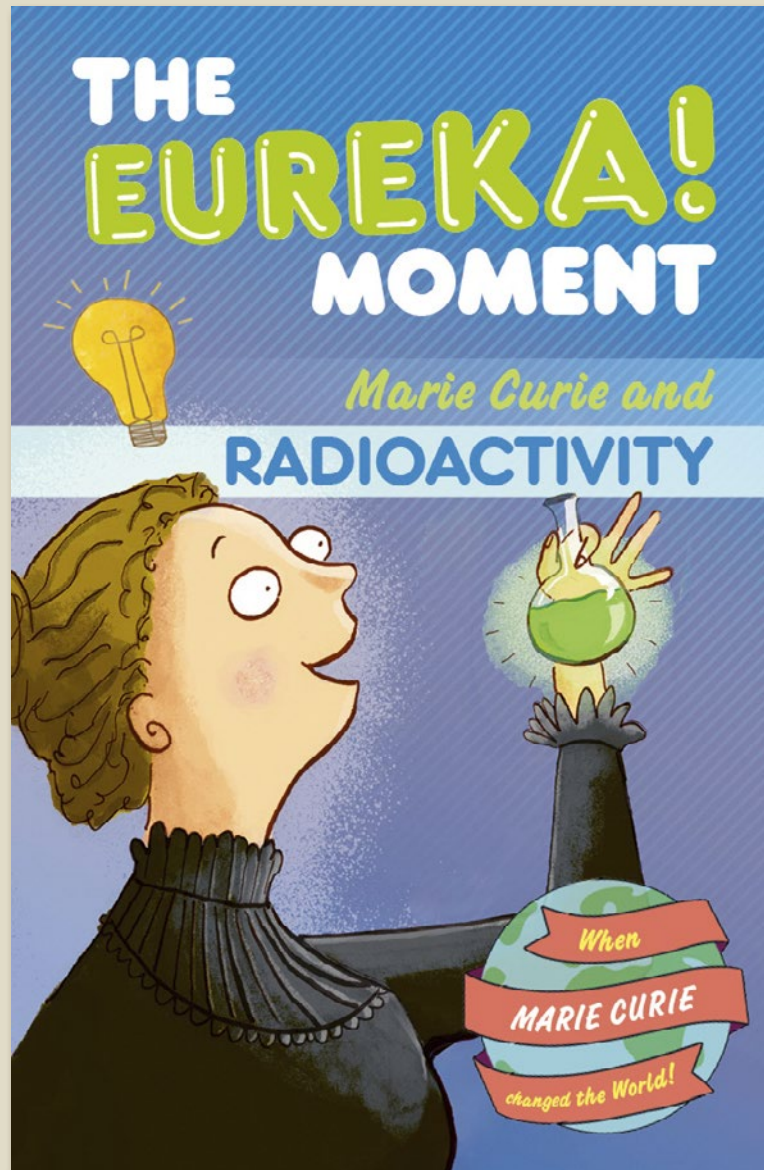


# Evolution: The Eureka! Moment



Pub Date	<b>29/02/2024</b>
Pub Price	<b>£5.99</b>
ISBN	<b>9781800788473</b>
H x W	<b>198 x 129mm</b>
Binding	<b>Paperback</b>
Age Range	<b>9-11 years</b>
Author	<b>Ian Graham</b>
Illustrator	<b>Annaliese Stoney</b>
Extent	<b>144pp</b>
Word Count	<b>15936 words</b>
Rights Available	<b>World</b>

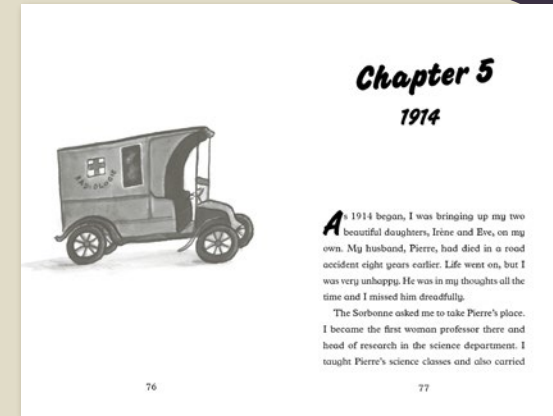
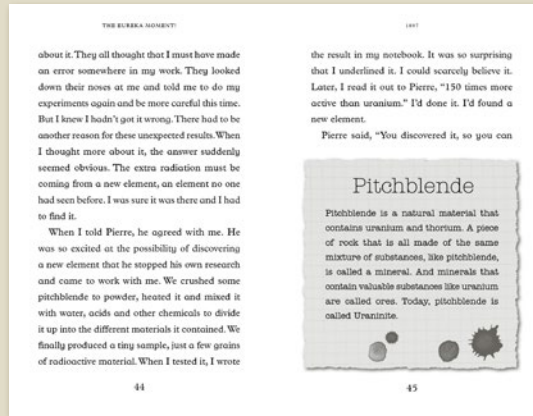
# Radioactivity: The Eureka! Moment



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

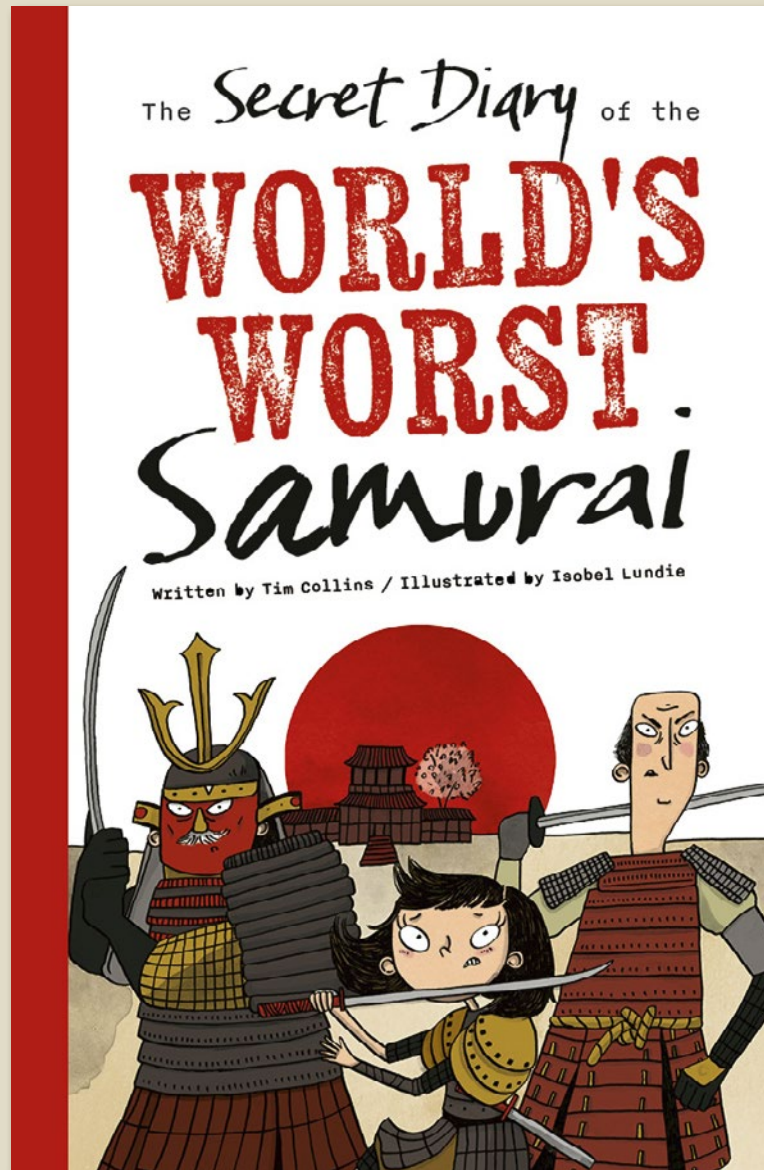
- Child-friendly narrative non-fiction curated to deepen children's knowledge of key moments in the history of science in an accessible, entertaining manner.
- This series introduces children to a myriad of inspirational individuals and the barriers they faced during their quest for knowledge, encouraging 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.

# Radioactivity: The Eureka! Moment



Pub Date	29/02/2024
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ISBN	9781800788527
H x W	198 x 129mm
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Age Range	9-11 years
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Illustrator	Annaliese Stoney
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Word Count	14683 words
Rights Available	World

# World's Worst Samurai



**A hilarious, fictional account of the world's unluckiest Samurai warrior!**

- A fantastically funny illustrated story that promotes an inspiring, positive female role model.
- Engaging story about perseverance, believing in yourself and overcoming barriers.
- Fascinating facts are interspersed throughout the fictional story, with 'get real' sections educating readers about the real-world contexts and histories of Japan and Samurai warriors.
- Endmatter includes a timeline and historical biographies of famous Samurai warriors to help engage children with the real-world historical context and encourage further research.

# World's Worst Samurai



Yasutaro laughed, and I had to stop myself from throwing my bowl at him. I don't know much about the code of the samurai, but I'm guessing that attacking your own brother during a meal probably isn't part of it.

Mother told me to stop talking nonsense and get on with my chores.

I was expecting Father to say something similar, but he didn't. He froze with his rice bowl in his hand and peered at me in silence. Then he asked why I wanted to be a samurai.

I told him I was from a great samurai family, and it wasn't fair that Yasutaro got to be one and I didn't.

Father nodded and asked if I had any other reason.

I said I was better at fighting than Yasutaro, and if I could be sent to Yoshihiro I would emerge as the true warrior of our family.

Father nodded and asked if I had any other reason.

I said I was better at tactics than Yasutaro, and one day I could become a great commander and lead troops to glorious victories.

Father finished his rice in silence. When his bowl was empty, he said he refused to send me to samurai school.

I tried to keep my anger in, but it was no use. I said it was ridiculous that he wouldn't let me train just because I was a girl.

Father laughed. He said that wasn't the reason, and there were many stories about

female samurai who'd commanded armies of thousands. He said the reason he wouldn't send me was because I wasn't thinking like a true samurai should.

Mother repeated her demand for me to get back to my duties, but Father said I could be excused for one day. He told me to take the time to think and then answer the question again tomorrow morning.



## GET REAL

*Female samurai were rare, but some became legendary figures whose stories were repeated long after they died. An epic account of 12th century battles called The Tale of the Heike describes a female warrior called Tameo Goto. It says she was 'fit to confront a demon or a god' and 'worth a thousand warriors'.*

I would never have believed anyone could move that fast, never mind someone so thin and old.

Yoshihiro said we'd try it the other way around. He handed me the pebble and told me to stop him from grabbing it. I placed it in my palm and took a deep breath. This didn't sound too hard. All I'd have to do was clasp my hand as soon as I saw him move.

I told him to go ahead. His hand moved in a rapid blur, and my fingers slapped into an empty palm.

We tried again. I snapped my fingers shut sooner this time, but they still closed on thin air.

I asked Yoshihiro to give me one more chance. He agreed, and this time I smacked my hand shut even faster.



I gasped. There was something inside my hand. On just the first day of training I'd beaten his test. Here was proof that I was destined to be a great warrior.

I opened my hand. In the centre was a small pebble that had been painted red. For a moment, I wondered how it could have changed colour. Then Yoshihiro opened his own hand to

## Chapter I Japan, 1582



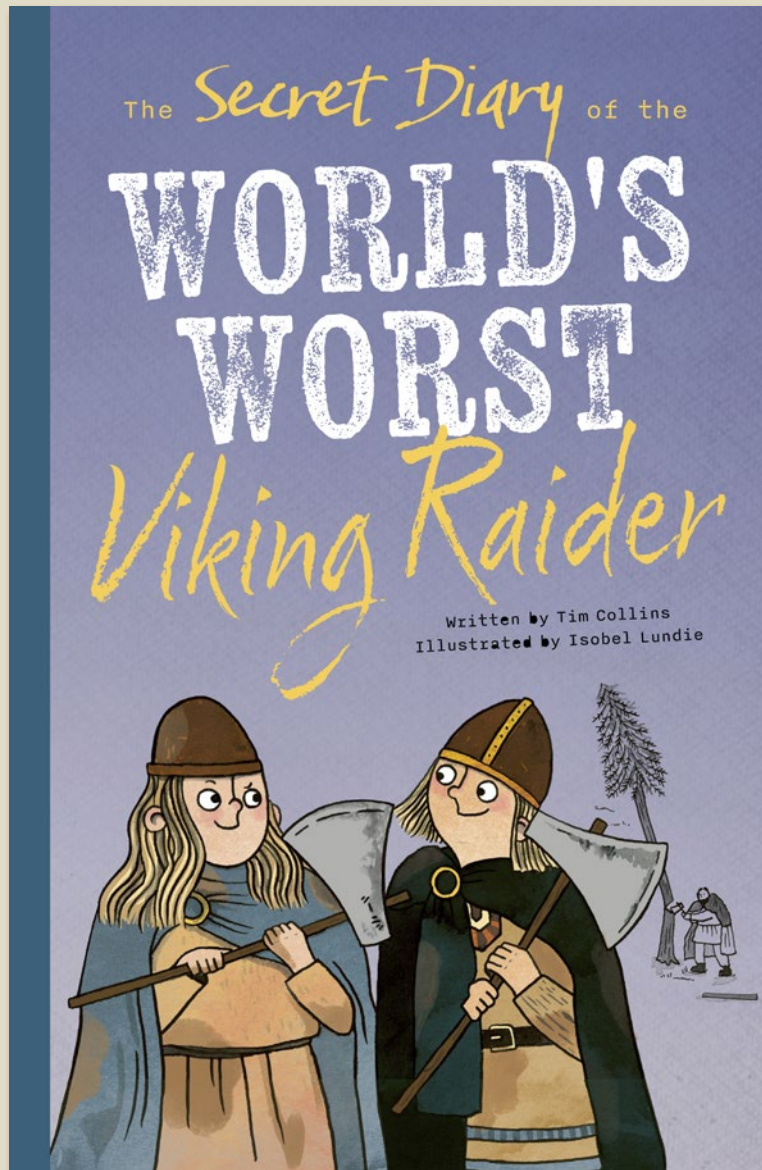
### Day One

Mother thinks I'm practising my writing. I do it every day and she never reads it. So while I kneel here in my silk robe, dabbing my brush onto the paper like an obedient daughter, I'm going to reveal my true destiny.

I, Suki Akiyama, am going to become a samurai warrior. My father is one, and my brother is training to become one. It's in my blood.

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Illustrator	Isobel Lundie
Extent	216pp
Word Count	20307 words
Rights Available	World

# World's Worst Viking Raider



## An illustrated fictional account of the world's unluckiest Viking!

- Humorous, engaging and easy-to-read chapter book about perseverance, courage and overcoming barriers, ideal for history and adventure lovers 7+.
- A fantastically funny fictional story in a factual setting.
- Fascinating facts are interspersed throughout with 'get real' sections educating readers about the real-world contexts and histories of the Viking world.
- Endmatter includes a timeline and historical biographies to help engage readers with this specific time period and encourage further research.

# World's Worst Viking Raider

I raced up to him and announced that I was a fearless raider who wanted to join his crew. Unfortunately, he didn't hear, and kept shouting at his men.

I tapped him on the shoulder so I could say it again. It turned out not to be a great idea to surprise a grizzled old raider. He shoved me to the muddy floor, drew his sword and pressed it to my throat. It was so sharp that a single burp could have killed me. I was glad I hadn't eaten too much porridge that morning.

I begged him not to kill me, and told him that he could have anything he wanted if he let me live, including my collection of carved Thor and Loki figures.

He nodded, tucked his sword back into its sheath and asked me what I wanted from him.

I told him I was a fearsome warrior and wanted to join his crew.

Looking back, I can see that might not have been the best time to make the announcement.



## GET REAL

One of the reasons the Vikings were so successful as traders and raiders was their longships. They were narrow enough to travel down rivers, and light enough to be rolled over the ground on logs. Some believe they had dragon heads carved at the front to frighten people as they approached.

## Eighth Day

The raiders moored their ship in the harbour yesterday morning and spent the rest of the day putting up their tents and trading their plundered goods for weapons, clothes, wheat and dried fish. Our village leader, Birger, has said he's happy for them to stay and share our



## Ninth Day

I've found out what the raiders are planning. A trader has told them about a small village on the east coast of England, which has lots of valuable treasure and hardly anyone capable of defending it. They're going to sail across the sea, take all the valuable stuff from it and come back here.

That sounds perfect. I could go with them, join in with the raid and come right back. The English village is an easy target, and I'll be with some very experienced fighters, so I'll be in no danger. I'll get some excellent raiding experience and I won't be away long. There's no way Mum and Dad can object to that.

## Later

Dad and Mum have objected. They think it will be too dangerous, even though I've explained that it won't be. I've warned them that I'm going to keep asking until they agree, but they don't think I actually mean it. They'll find out.



and hacking through wood, flesh, bone and whatever stands in the way of my plunder.

At least I would if I had an axe. Dad won't let me have one in case I cut myself.



## Third Day

Forget what I said. I do have an axe now. Sort of.

I met my best friend Astrid to play at raiding, and she brought one from her dad's workshop. He's the best blacksmith in our village, and he makes amazing shields and weapons.

We went to the forest north of our village and took turns playing with the axe. I pretended I was in a raid and all the trees were terrified locals. I ran towards them, roaring and swinging my axe, then I planted it right into



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Word Count	<b>20919 words</b>
Rights Available	<b>World</b>

# Ghost Stories



## Ten spooky spine-tingling 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

## SHIVERS

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 Bronze 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 hit 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

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## 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 sighed 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 again.

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

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## 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 rain 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 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

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## GHOST STORIES

up. A black shape swooped over their heads. "Scary!" Sacha frowned. "That bird is like an omen. An omen of doom!"

Their boots squelched through mud. "Not long," Liam called. "We'll soon be at the top." A flash of lightning snaked across the sky and a loud crack rumbled over the moor. "It's like something from a horror movie," Sacha panted. The rain swept across in silvery squalls. At the top of the hill Liam pointed into the next valley. "That must be the hostel. Down there. With the tall chimney and smoke."

"I don't like the look of it," Sacha murmured. "It won't take us long," Liam said, 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 peeping through parting clouds.

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## 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, "I've got cash. They'll let us stay the night."

Clanging through the gate, they walked along the path, up some crumbling steps and to the porch. A pair of boots caked in dried mud lay on the top step. Liam slammed his fist on the heavy door and a hollow thud echoed before the door swung open. A dimly lit hallway with dark oak panels stretched in front of them. The smell of soot drifted out over the porch. A thin, bent man

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## 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

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## 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

**W**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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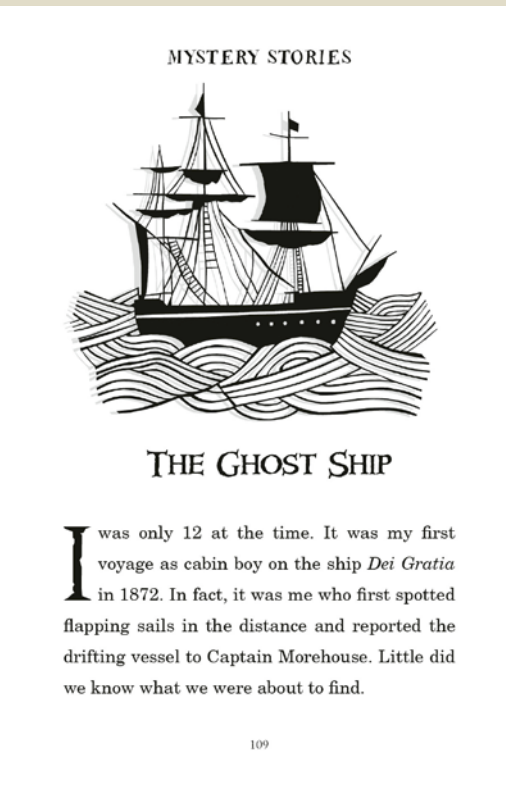
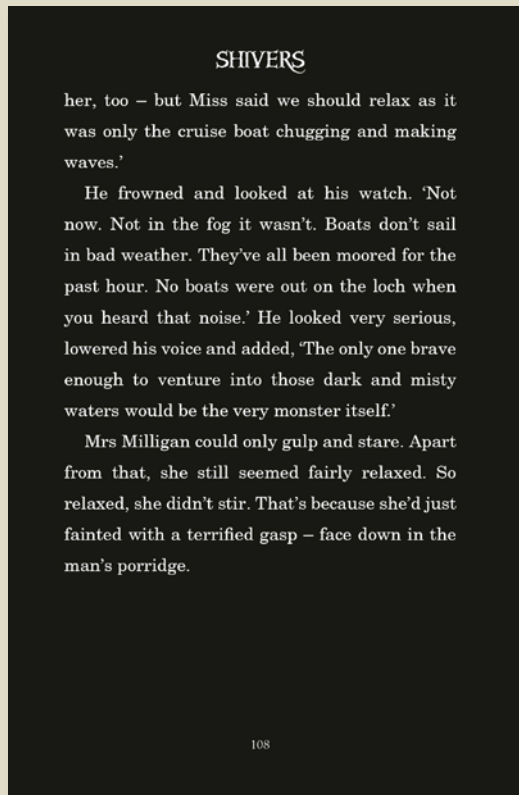
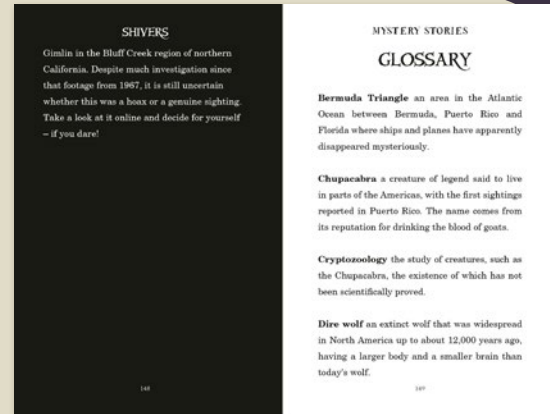
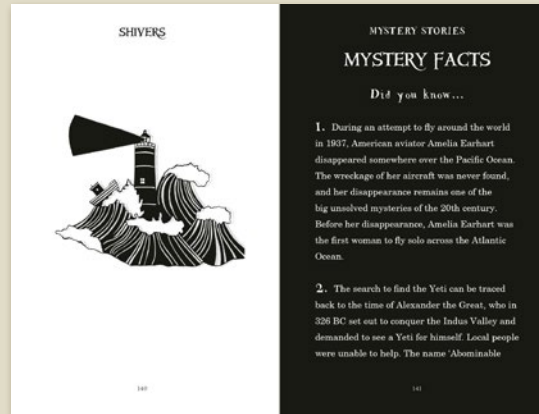
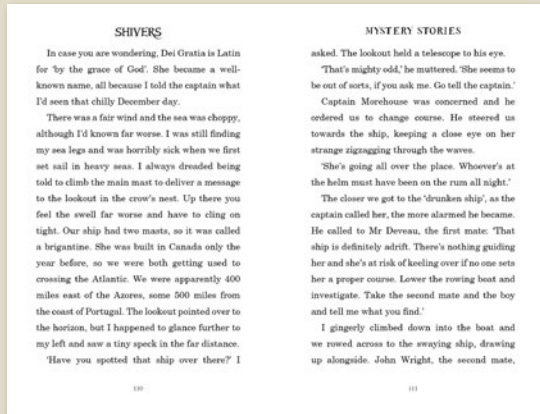
# Mystery Stories



## Ten mysterious, spooky short stories

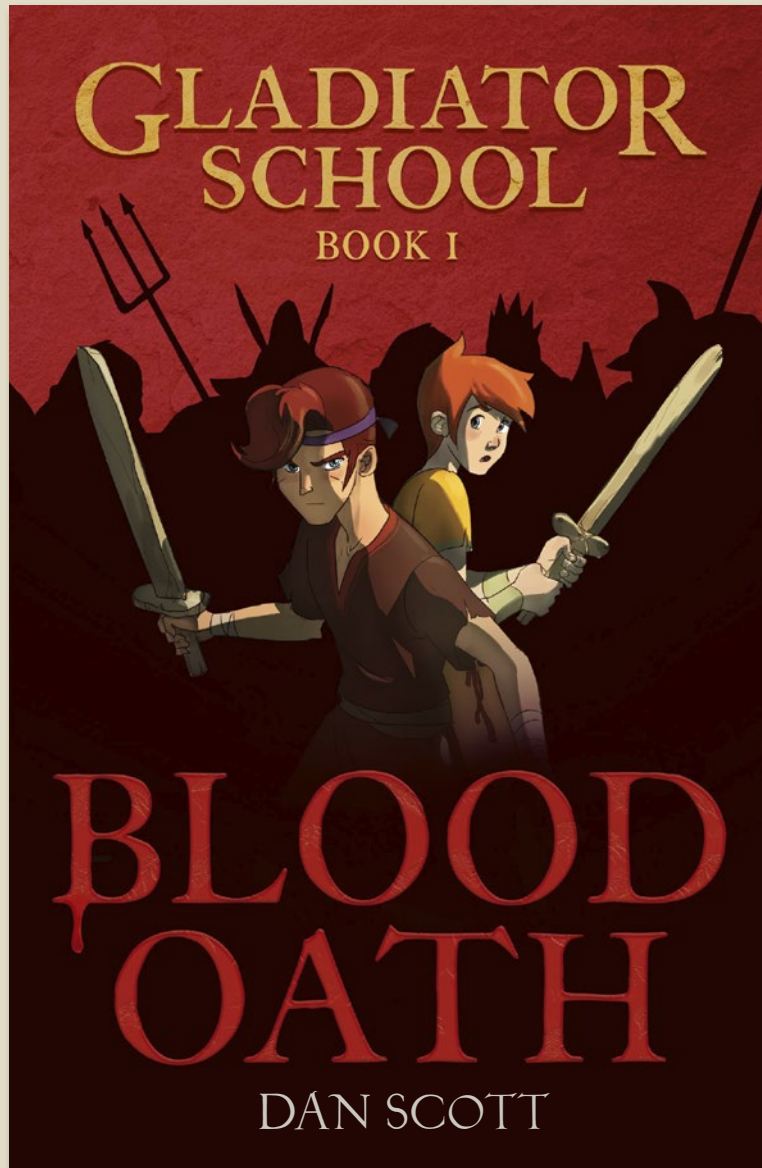
- A wonderful, entertaining introduction to the horror genre and short story writing, perfect for children studying this in English.
- Perfect spooky gift for children to read one story each night in the build up to Halloween.
- Encourages independent reading and exploration of new genres.

# Mystery Stories



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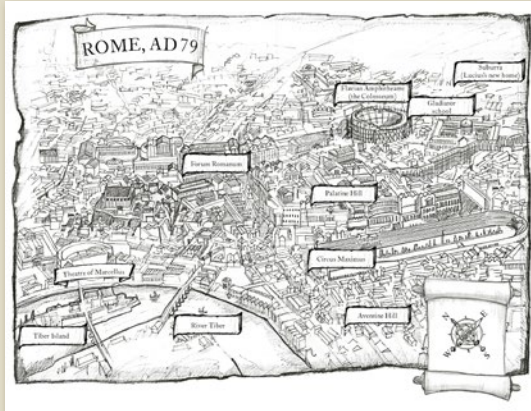
# Gladiator School 1: Blood Oath



**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.
- Fast-paced, action-packed and full of unexpected twists and turns. Great for reluctant readers searching for an exciting adventure story to keep them entertained.
- Contains additional notes throughout to define key Roman words, helping children to learn more about ancient society and immerse themselves in the time period.

# Gladiator School 1: Blood Oath



GLADIATOR SCHOOL

close to her, Valeria, who was made of sterner stuff, had wriggled free and stared at the soldiers in round-eyed wonder.

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 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 birthday. And now 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 creaky and unfamiliar. 'What are you talking about?' asked Quintus.

*\* From the marketplace of ancient Rome, which was also the place for business meetings and political transactions.*

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BLOOD OATH

He sounded irritable and indignant. *How funny, thought Lucius. Quint always knows everything. How come he doesn't know this?*

'Explain yourself,' snapped out the soldier, who was evidently losing patience fast.

'Look,' said Lucius.

Finally Quint followed the direction of his brother's gaze and his eyes fell on the altar. Lucius saw Quint's posture change. His shoulders sagged, his face registered confusion and disbelief.

'The dog's gone,' he said.

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. Aquila had said that it represented the faithfulness of true friends. He would never take the statue on a normal working day. But it would always travel with him when he made a journey.

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

Lucius nodded.

The soldier's mouth set into a grim line. 'Right,' he said.

He called his men and ordered them to his side.

'You're going?' Quint asked.

'Yes,' said the soldier. 'We'll leave you to your shame.'

*\* What he supposed to mean? Quint had recovered from his initial shock and was treacherous again.*

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GLADIATOR SCHOOL

be many weeks – perhaps months – of this ahead of him.

Quin had always seemed strong and powerful. But now, standing barefoot in the middle of the arena, wearing nothing but a haircloth, he looked like a child. Blood and sweat were smeared across his back and shoulders.

Other novice 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 had stayed behind.

'No sword, no shield, no armour,' he muttered. 'It's not fair.'

'They have to learn to fight with no kit at first,' said a voice behind him. 'The weapons come later.'

Lucius spun around and saw a slave girl standing there. Her thick, black hair hung in two heavy plaits around her oval face. Lucius didn't know what to say. A month ago he would have smiled and thanked her. He would have known his own status. Now, working in the gladiator school, he didn't even feel like himself any more. He certainly didn't feel like talking. He turned back to the arena, where Quin was on his back again.

One of the watching gladiators turned 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.'

*\* Lucius (gladly) worked as a trainer gladiator.*

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BLOOD OATH

Clearly this gladiator was badly trained and fighting for money. Lucius didn't answer but, as he heard another cry of pain from Quin, his throat burred. He would be sick if he kept on watching. He had to get out. Luckily, he had an excuse to leave: his uncle had asked him to deliver a message to someone in the Forum.

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The sweltering streets of Rome seemed less busy than usual. Lucius weaved his way towards the Forum, the cries of street sellers ringing in his ears as he dashed through the throng of carts and chariots. The acid smell of urine and excrement stung his throat. He stumbled over a litter of piglets trotting across his path and the owner yelled at him. 'Out of the way, boy!'

'Stupid,' Lucius murmured, snooting to the side of the street, where a meat vendor who was selling piles of fresh red hags was splattering everyone in the vicinity with blood.

He hadn't been paying much attention to his route until now. He knew the streets so well that his feet would carry him to the marketplace while his mind was still in the arena with his brother. But now he realised that he was standing on the street where their old home was. The shops set into the villa walls were selling the same cloth and clay pots of olive oil as always. Everything looked just as it had been in the old days.

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## PROLOGUE

# TRAITOR!

ROME  
JULY AD 79



## 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, a slave
- Rufus, a slave
- Crassus, a trainer of gladiators



Lucius 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 statues.

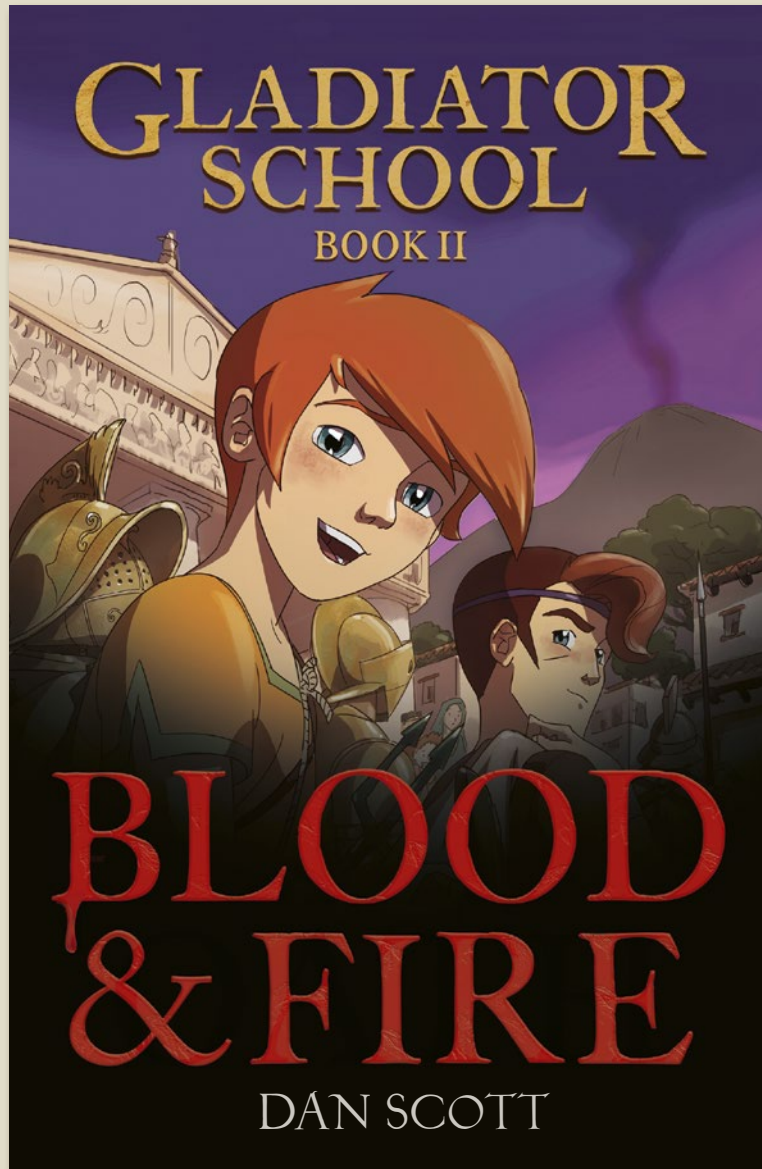
The soldiers had stormed through the villa, overturning furniture, rattling their swords and yelling, 'We arrest you, Quintus Valerius Aquila; in the name of the Emperor, show yourself!'

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

\* atrium: the entrance hall of a Roman villa.

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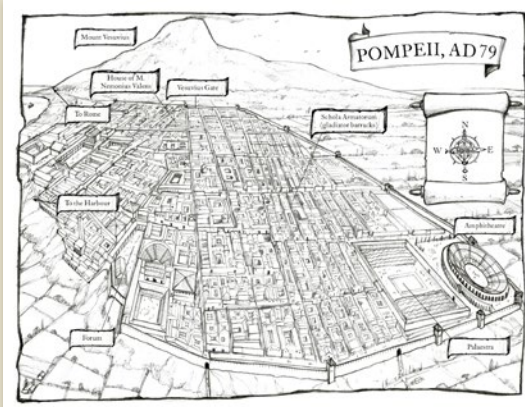
# Gladiator School 2: Blood & Fire



**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 1

POMPEII, 19 AUGUST AD 79  
120 hours before the eruption of Vesuvius

The midday sun beat down on Lucius as he pursued Quintus through the streets of Pompeii. He glimpsed his brother's tall, athletic figure up ahead, snarling along through the crowds heading west towards the Forum. Lucius would have preferred to walk side by side with Quintus through this unfamiliar city, but seemed he would not be welcomed.

Sounds of cooking meat from the fast-food shops mingled with the stench wafting over from the fish-sauce factories near the harbour. Lucius's ears echoed with the voices of fruit sellers and wine merchants and the pipes and drums of bakers. The noise and

\* Forum: the main marketplace, which was also the place for business meetings and judicial decisions.

GLADIATOR SCHOOLS

squalor reminded him of Subura, the area where he now lived in Rome. Yet Pompeii seemed to carry an eerie air of horror. The shadow-filled alleys, the hard faces of the young men, the cold-eyed stare of a beggar woman – they all spelled danger to Lucius. Maybe it was his imagination, but Pompeii seemed like a city brimming with desperate and unscrupulous people who'd murder you for the price of a loaf of bread. He was glad he'd decided to follow Quintus. Somehow, he felt his brother needed watching in a place like this. Of course, Quintus was a gladiator and very capable of looking after himself – yet Lucius knew he could be hot-headed at times, and in these strange and scary streets he might very easily get himself into trouble.

From a nearby side street, Lucius heard a cry of pain. His natural caution made him want to hurry on past, but then he saw Quintus turn and enter the alley. Hesitantly, Lucius followed, rubbing the ring on his forefinger for luck. It was his only memento of his father, and had become his talisman. Concealing himself behind a pile of amphorae\*, Lucius saw Quintus approach a group of rough-looking young men. They were jeering and pushing around a lad of about their own age. From his smart, formal toga, now bespattered with mud, Lucius could tell the victim was a young man of status, though this did not seem to count for much among his tormentors.

\* amphorae (singular amphora): earthenware storage jars.

BLOOD & FIRE

His sense of fairness clearly offended, Quintus impulsively stride into the middle and pushed aside one of the bullies, who had been holding the victim in a neck lock. The bully squeaked in surprise and fell to the ground. His friends immediately closed in around Quintus, their jeers turning to snarls of anger.

There were six of them – three armed with sticks against the unarmed Quintus. Lucius growled. He stole himself, knowing he would have to go and help his brother. With his slender build, Lucius wasn't made for physical violence. He cursed their fate for bringing them here to Pompeii.

It was ten days since Crassus, the lanista of the gladiator school, had made the announcement. The school had received a great honour, he said: it had been chosen to represent Rome at the forthcoming games in Pompeii. A total of thirty gladiators would be going, including Quintus. And Lucius had been dismayed to learn that he too was among those selected to go. It was a seven-day march to Pompeii, and there would be a further week spent in the city. Taking the return march into account, that meant that Lucius would be gone from Rome for three whole weeks – time he had been hoping to spend searching for his father. What if Aquila tried to contact him during that time? It seemed that fate had once again intervened to prevent them from meeting.



## 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



Games 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 helmet and fights with a short sword (gladius); his name means 'Chaser'.

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