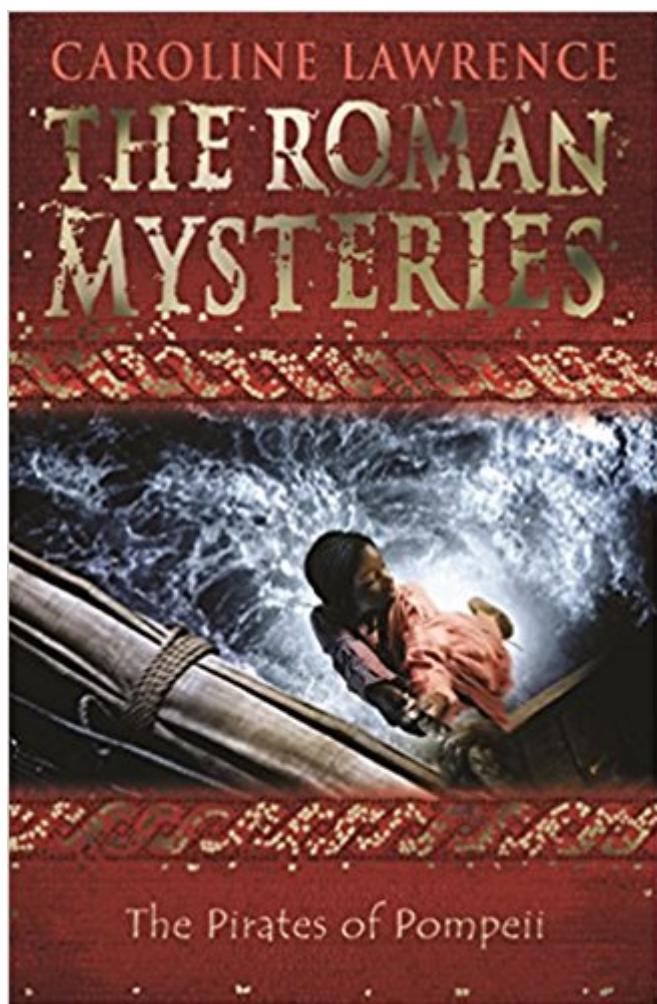


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The Pirates Of Pompeii (The Roman Mysteries)



Synopsis

It is AD 79 and Mount Vesuvius has erupted, destroying Pompeii. Among the thousands of people huddled in refugee camps along the bay of Naples are Flavia Gemina and her friends, Jonathan the Jewish boy, Nubia the African slave-girl, and Lupus the mute beggar boy. When the friends discover that children are being kidnapped from the camps, they start to investigate and soon solve the mystery of the pirates of Pompeii. A terrifically exciting and dramatic story packed with superb historical detail.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 14 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

Customer Reviews

Grade 5-7-Flavia, Jonathan, Lupus, and Nubia are once again faced with a mystery. The year is 79 C.E. and Mount Vesuvius has just erupted, leaving chaos and destruction in its wake. The children are living in a refugee camp with Jonathan's father and Flavia's uncle. The sky is hazy and red, everything is covered in a thick layer of ash, and the wails of professional mourners and families who have lost loved ones pierce the air. One by one, children disappear from the area and Flavia and her friends decide to find out why. Woven into the mystery are problems and issues of Roman life such as the abusive treatment of slaves and the class structure of the patron/client system. The search for the missing children is fast paced and in several instances peril seems imminent. Newcomers to the series may be a little confused by this one but fans will enjoy it. Genevieve

Gallagher, Orange County Public Library, VACopyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 4-7. This third book in the Roman Mysteries series continues the first-century B.C.E. adventures of teen sleuth Flavia and her sidekicks. This title begins in a refugee camp in the aftermath of Vesuvius' eruption. While assisting the camps' doctors, Flavia and her friends discover that many children have disappeared in the chaos. Suspecting a kidnapping plot, the friends investigate, and their inquiries lead them to the opulent villa of a wealthy, charming nobleman. Is he behind the kidnappings? The friends discover the answer in a series of terrifying near-death adventures. As in the series' previous titles, Lawrence combines vivid period details and graceful imagery with a thrilling pace and some gory action scenes, always portraying Flavia and her friends as well-drawn young people whose playfulness, jealousies, outrage, and courage will resonate with contemporary readers. Additional themes of slavery and class issues add depth to the plot, while a glossary defines the many Roman terms used throughout. Gillian EngbergCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Violence, death and disaster mark this excellent book, in the tradition of Robert Louis Stevenson. This is robust reading for kids with a taste for adventure. I bought several books in this series in an effort to get my 12 year-old stepdaughter to start reading again, after she seemed to lose interest in books. The iPad, television and digital media in general had monopolized her attention, and her constant complaint was that books were "boring." The series was a great success with her, and she has read them all with great enjoyment. There is a lot of graphic violence in this particular book, but that seems to help break through kids' resistance to reading. High drama is often what young readers need to keep them turning the pages. Recommended.

This is the third book in the Roman Mysteries series of books. Again I downloaded this book for my thirteen-year-old to read. She had originally read the book in French when she was twelve. She really enjoyed the book and feels that the content is age appropriate. She recommends this book to anyone interested in the time period and this type of writing.

As all the books in this series it is a really enthralling book in the Amalfi coast setting. The main subject of this book is the slave trade, and the daily Roman life.

great kids book

Excellent

Picking right up from where *The Secrets of Vesuvius* ended, this story finds Flavia, Nubia, Lupa and Jonathan stationed in a refugee camp on the outskirts of Pompeii. After the eruption of the volcano, our four young protagonists managed to escape the rain of ash and rivers of lava along with the rest of their families, but are still far from safe. Jonathan has slipped into a coma, and whilst the girls scour the coast for herbs that may revive him, Lupa grows conscious of another danger lurking nearby. Several children are disappearing from the refugee camp, and it's apparent that pirates are making the most of the chaos in order to kidnap freeborn children and sell them into slavery. The amateur sleuths investigate matters, and a variety of clues leads them to suspect the wealthy, charismatic Publius Pollius Felix as the mastermind behind the kidnappings. Using all their cunning, they manage to infiltrate his beautiful villa of Limona on the coast of Surrentum (modern day Sorrento) as his guests. Each character has their own mini-plot as they explore and investigate the villa. Flavia goes head-to-head with Felix's spoilt daughter Pulchra over the treatment of her slaves, whilst Jonathan teams up with her in order to spy on her father. Lupa overhears some strange conversations held between men in the bay, and Nubia finds runaway slaves and must come to a decision on whether or not to join them. It's only a matter of time before the children come up against the slave-traders - terrifying men who wear grotesque comedy-masks - and from there the investigation turns into a rescue mission as they struggle to free the children, alert the authorities and save themselves from slavery. "The Roman Mysteries" is one of those rare series when each progressive book is on par - if not superior - to the one before. It turns insightful, suspenseful, exciting, humorous, and tear-jerking, "The Pirates of Pompeii" takes our characters and puts them on another adventure that challenges and changes them, whilst at the same time letting us learn more about them. We get more insight into Nubia and Lupa's pasts (though you can tell that Lawrence is saving more for later), as well as a few tidbits concerning the mystery of Jonathan's mother. Flavia is the most straightforward of all the children, but it's always fun to watch her to form crushes, organise the others, and get outraged whenever she witnesses an injustice. As always, the research Lawrence puts into the stories is fascinating without being too invasive. Here she delicately examines the reality of slavery in Ancient Rome, without condemning nor praising it. Rather, the values dissonance of the time is presented as matter of fact to the reader: naturally the protagonists find the selling of freeborn children as horrific, as is beating a helpless slave - but

slavery itself gets no dismissive commentary. It is simply a way of life for these people, and they're not going to question it. The inequality between high-born Flavia and her slave Nubia is also addressed; resulting in a rather poignant picture of friendship that is treasured by both participants, but clearly not one of equals. Containing maps, a glossary and an afterword that explains some of the book's content, (Villa Limona was actually based on a real place that is believed to have been owned by a man called Felix Pollius) the story combines world-building, strong characterization, an interesting plot, and lovely clear prose into one excellent whole. As always, Lawrence manages to pack in a huge amount of story into a comparatively short novel, without anything ever feeling messy or convoluted. Little things like Nubia's flute and Jonathan's sleeping powder are mentioned early on and are returned to the narrative in rewarding ways, and characterization is always spot-on - such as Jonathan's sense of humor being utilized in a very heartrending way in order to calm the enslaved children. All the plot-threads are woven together neatly, with the most important ones tied up at the end, and several always left dangling in order to take us into the next book: *The Assassins of Rome*.

The Pirates of Pompeii follows immediately after the events in *The Secret's of Vesuvius*, and is the third in Lawrence's Roman Mysteries Series. Here we rejoin Flavia, Nubia, Jonathan, and Lupus as they find themselves in a refugee camp near Surrentum. As with the previous books, this volume is set in the first century, 79 A.D. As we start out here, the group (along with Uncle Gaius, Aristo, Miriam, Mordecai and the dogs) are working hard to help the survivors with Mrodecai offering his services free of charge and running a surgery out of a bath house near the harbor of Stabia. Not long after arriving there, the foursome discovers a frightened young girl hiding in a cave on the mountain and learns that children are disappearing from the refugee camp...and we all know this is a mystery that Falvia and her friends cannot turn their back on. They begin immediately trying to solve it, a task which takes them to Villa Limona the home of Publius Pollius Felix. Their mystery leads them to search for a man known as "The Patron" and they have encounters with run away slaves, pirates, and the Emperor himself all in the course of solving this mystery! As with the previous book, this is an excellent glimpse into the daily life of the Roman people and deals with wide ranging issues from disaster relief, the treatment (abuse of slaves is a big topic in this book) of slaves, the division of the class system, and the fall of Jerusalem (ten years prior). The children must deal with all manner of human failings from pirates who want to sell them as slaves, to spoiled bratty rich children, to the issue of profiteering from the disaster at Pompeii. All in all, it manages to address a lot of series issues, give a solid look at life in the given time period, and still be

entertaining and fun to read! The Pirates of Pompeii the focus is almost exclusively on the four children with the adults playing only a brief role at the beginning and end. The only adult to have a significant part here is Pollius, who I would label as a "guest star" in this volume. Overall, this was a highly enjoyable mystery/thriller/adventure book for young readers that is heavy on the details of Roman daily life and is highly descriptive with likable and believable characters (for the most part). Previously, what I felt that there was a bit of a heavy handed Christian message to the series, however it's much more subtle in this book and is more welcome...woven into the story with more skill. I also liked that the inequality between Falvia (freeborn) and Nubia (her slave) is addressed more directly here (as with Lopus also). I give it four stars, The Pirates of Pompeii strength is in details and overall, it is a light and entertaining read.

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