



The Sewer Demon

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Book

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This title is the first of a spin-off from Caroline Lawrence's 'The Roman Mysteries' series. According to the blurb it is a 'ruder, funnier and still historically accurate version of the Roman Mysteries'.

I think I can safely say it is certainly ruder in that most of the story revolves around the Roman Men's Lavatory system. Threptus, who appeared in the last of the Roman Mysteries, is chased by a group of bullies into the lavatories. There are many graphic descriptions of what goes on in there, no doubt historically accurate. Threptus overhears a conversation while trapped in the sewer system, which enables his mentor, Floridus, to gain his licence to sell various artefacts.

The sentences are short and the story moves along well, although there is little of an historical feel. Threptus is an engaging character, Floridus is a very smooth operator and together they make a good team, but I do wonder if lavatorial humour is the way to get boys to read about Rome. History does not have to be solemn and pompously imparted through fiction of course but neither does it need to talk about toilets and wiping bottoms with sponges!

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