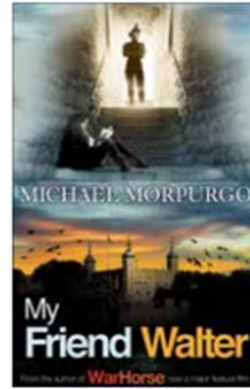


michael morpurgo

My Friend Walter



My Friend Walter – Tobacco Smoke

'Walter Raleigh left me wrapped in his black velvet cloak and limped across the room to the door. 'They've gone,' he said and he closed the door again.

'But why didn't they see us?' I asked. 'That little boy, he was looking right at me.'

'Cousin Bess, though I yearn often to be once more amongst the living, there are some advantages to be had in my present more spiritual state. Since I am but a spirit, and a spirit has no body, I may go where I will unseen. My cloak is part of me and I may hide what I will under it. I may pass through walls and doors as if they were not there, and I may eavesdrop invisibly on the living world as much as I wish – indeed there is little else to do in this wretched damp place. Oh, do not think cousin, that I do not still feel the damp in my bones. To be a ghost is to live with all the pain of the living but with little of the pleasure.'

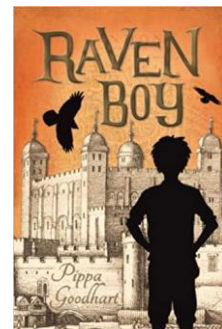
'But I still don't understand: how can I see you and they can't?' I asked.

Sir Walter smiled. 'You can only see me because I wish you to see me. I do not wish them to see me, so they cannot.'

(My Friend Walter, Chapter 2, Pages 23-24)

Pippa Goodhart

RAVEN BOY



RAVEN BOY – Chapter One

There were sounds from up above – moans and another thump – Nick and Seth glanced upward. Seth's laughter stopped.

'You don't think it might be the plague do you Nick? There's more dying of it everyday they say. We've nailed up a family in Fenchurch Street now and I saw a man yesterday fall where he stood and none to help him. You don't think.....

'What's this talk of the plague, Seth Binder? In my house? Never! And don't you go spreading that gossip!.....

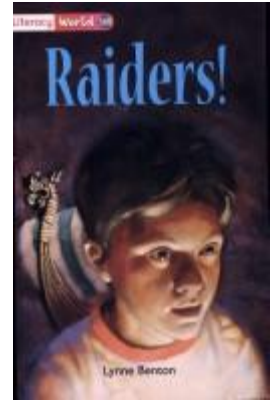
.....I fear that the you-know-what has come amongst us, Nicholas. The plague into my own house! Said Mistress Jenkins. 'I want your mother out of my house, and nobody to know of it, or they'll come and nail us all in to die of it. You must take your mother away from here, Nicholas! I beg you!

...'I want to go home! Said Mercy. Home; where Mother lay dying. Where the searcher would come in his long black gown and bird-head mask to swoop up the stairs and loom over Mother and summon the death cart and the men ..with long hooked poles....

Lynne Benton

Raiders!

...after a while I must have dozed off.



There's a strange, thick, smoky smell. I open my eyes. I am lying in a wooden hut. It's quite dark, but there's a fire burning in the middle of the floor. A woman in a long blue dress is bending over it. She hasn't noticed me. I seem to be wearing a rough, scratchy brown tunic. I am covered by some sort of animal skin, which is warm, but smells funny. 'Edric! are you awake?'

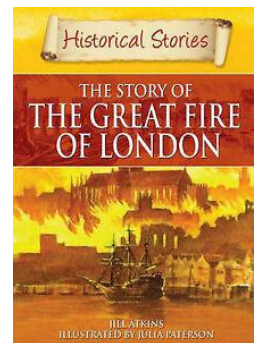
...I am in the Great Hall. There is a fire in the middle and people are sitting at tables all around the edges. Everyone is drinking out of horns and eating meat, fish, bread and vegetables.

Just then we hear the dogs barking outside. Someone near the door goes out to see what has set them off and comes back in a moment with a stranger. The stranger is dressed like everyone else, in tunic and leggings, but his are torn and dirty and he looks very tired. 'I have travelled a long way he says,' 'and I bring news.' Alfworld raises his cup. 'Won't you join us in our feast? When you have eaten, you can tell us your news.'

The stranger sits down and Elfreda and I watch him. He drinks down a cup of mead straight and eats every last scrap of his meal. The stranger stands up. 'My friends,' he says, 'I must bring you bad news. There are raiders in these parts.'

... Everybody has heard of raiders – huge, bearded warriors from over the sea... they have discovered our land is good for farming. They want to settle here.'

Jill Atkin The Story of The Great Fire OF LONDON



...His face was blackened and his clothes were torn and scorched. "My home burned to the ground. Three hundred houses in one night."

"Did anyone try to put the fire out?" said Mr Turner.

"No," said the man. "It took everyone by surprise. We were all in bed asleep when it started. We didn't think it would spread so fast. But there's a strong wind d=fanning the flames."

"We've had no rain this summer," said Mr Turner. "The houses are tinder dry."