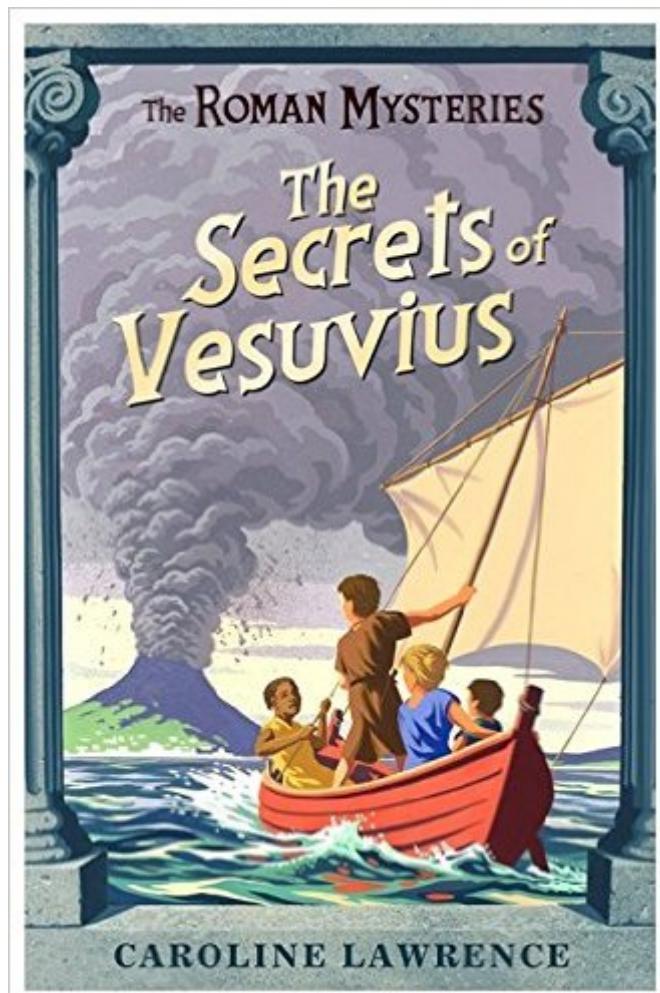


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# The Secrets Of Vesuvius (The Roman Mysteries)



## Synopsis

It's the summer of AD 79 and Flavia Gemina and her friends, Jonathan, Nubia and Lupus, set sail for the Bay of Naples where they are going to stay with Flavia's uncle near Pompeii. Once they arrive, they are soon absorbed in a quest to solve a riddle that may lead to treasure. But then tragedy strikes: Mount Vesuvius erupts and the friends must flee for their lives! Not just a mystery - this is an absolutely thrilling action adventure that brings history to life!

## Book Information

Series: The Roman Mysteries (Book 2)

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #108,530 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #33 in Â Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Ancient #54 in Â Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Ancient Civilizations #66 in Â Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Historical

Age Range: 12 - 14 years

Grade Level: 7 - 9

## Customer Reviews

The secrets of Vesuvius is the second novel by Caroline Lawrence. Flavia and three of her friends go to the Bay of Naples to spend the rest of the summer at her uncle's farm. The year is A.D. 79 and Mount Vesuvius has not erupted yet. The four friends find themselves trying to solve a riddle but strange things are going on. Birds are dropping to the ground dead. Dogs are howling and barking for no apparent reason. And people are going mad. I liked this book because it is filled with action on every page. When Mt. Vesuvius erupts Flavia and her friends have to get help... Flavia sends two of her friends to get help, but they encounter a problem. One of the friends is knocked out cold, so it is up to the other friend to swim a great distance to get help. All the while Flavia, Jonathan and Nubia are trying to stay alive until they are saved. If you like action, adventure, suspense with a little history throw in, this second book in the series will keep you reading ten pages every night. I

highly recommend this fantastic book.

I bought this for my fifth grade class, because I need engaging, well written historical fiction for them. Luckily I read it first. I enjoyed the story very much. The writing was descriptive and the characters were engaging. There were some adult issues in the book which made it "too adult" to put in my fifth grade classroom library. Spoilers! One of the characters suspects that his wife has been unfaithful and has had a baby by another man. I won't say whom because you may want to buy this for your older student. My opinion (you may agree or disagree) was that this subject made me decide not to invest in the whole series for my classroom. That being said, I am planning on reading more to see if there are any I can use in my class, because the writing style was such that I know my kiddos would like it!

The Secrets of Vesuvius (I will be deliberately vague in order not to give away the plot of the book) picks up where The Thieves of Ostia left off, transporting us to Pompeii in the middle of August 79 C.E. The mystery is rather subtle this time - a riddle that leads to treasure but something of a different kind than Flavia Gemina anticipates. Actually, there is an additional mystery concerning the identity of a new character to the story. The real joy of this book for me is the Elder Pliny being fleshed out as the inquisitive and curious person that he undoubtedly was. We meet him on several occasions and the children interact with him at great deal. Caroline Lawrence provides a marvelous tour of Pompeii and her attention to the details of everyday life is engaging as always. I have read Robert Harris' novel about Pompeii (which I highly recommend) with its meticulous information about Mount Vesuvius. We have a different vantage point in this book as the characters discover from environmental changes and historic accounts that Vesuvius is about to erupt. The course of the eruption itself is nicely told as some of the characters stay at the Gemina farm and some travel across Pompeii in an attempt to save friends and warn the people in general. We get an excellent perspective on how terrible the eruption of Vesuvius was, the kind of hazards people ran attempting to escape and what their options were to get away from danger. All of the characters in the book are profoundly affected by the tragedy and a few require the services of Doctor Mordecai. To sum up, The Secrets of Vesuvius is a mystery novel that adults and children can equally share and learn about Pompeii and life for the ancient Romans. Certainly after reading this book you will be eager for the next installment.

This story continues the tale of four young friends, living in 79AD. Jonathan, Flavia, Lupus and

Nubia have witnessed the eruption of Vesuvius, and are now in a refugee camp for survivors. Then, the leader of the group, Flavia, notices that children are going missing. She resolves to discover why. Soon, she and her friends are cast deep into a web of deceit, love, and misplaced loyalties. Flavia and Johnathan find out where the children are, as they too are kidnapped, and must find a way to escape before they are sold as slaves. The story also brings you closer to finding out the secret of Lupus' past.

This series was very useful when I was trying to woo my 11 year-old stepdaughter away from TV and back to reading. Sad to say, TV and computer games are so dynamic that books often can't compete with them for a child's attention. However this series, following the adventures of young sleuth Flavia and her friends, has enough pow wham and boom to be absolutely gripping. Set in the aftermath of the AD 79 eruption of Vesuvius, this is a powerful story with many modern resonances, while remaining historically correct and well-written. Highly recommended to young readers who want a thrilling read.

A series about four children living in ancient Rome. Flavia Gemina is the daughter of a sea-captain, and with her African slave girl Nubia and friends Jonathan, a Jewish doctor's son and Lupus, a mute boy, she is excited at the prospect of sailing across the Bay of Naples to spend the summer on her uncle's farm near Pompeii. Here the children meet Pliny, author of the famous 'Natural Histories' and Admiral of the war fleet. Pliny befriends them and sets them a puzzle - to unravel a riddle and find a wandering blacksmith. The friends run around the city of Pompeii, are invited to dinner in neighbouring villas and learn the legend of the blacksmith god Vulcan, whose forge shakes the earth and causes molten rock to pour forth from some mountains. Not even Pliny, however, realises that the mountain above them, Vesuvius, is a volcano about to erupt. The puzzle the friends are solving suddenly fades beside the clues they have noticed about the true nature of the mountain and their danger. The reek of sulphur frightens the adults around them, who have known it to kill sheep; although earth tremors are more usual and less worrying. Barking dogs, fleeing snakes and birds falling dead are cause for wonder, until Flavia recalls reading scrolls about a volcanic eruption elsewhere. Convinced that Vesuvius is waking, the friends decide they have to warn the inhabitants of Pompeii and nearby Herculaneum - and then ash begins to fall from the sky, setting like cement on the paving slabs. An exciting story which will be enjoyed by bright pre-teens to mid-teens, this tale brings to life the everyday Romans and their adventures. Having visited Pompeii and hiked up Vesuvius to look into its still-smoking crater, I found the book fascinating.

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