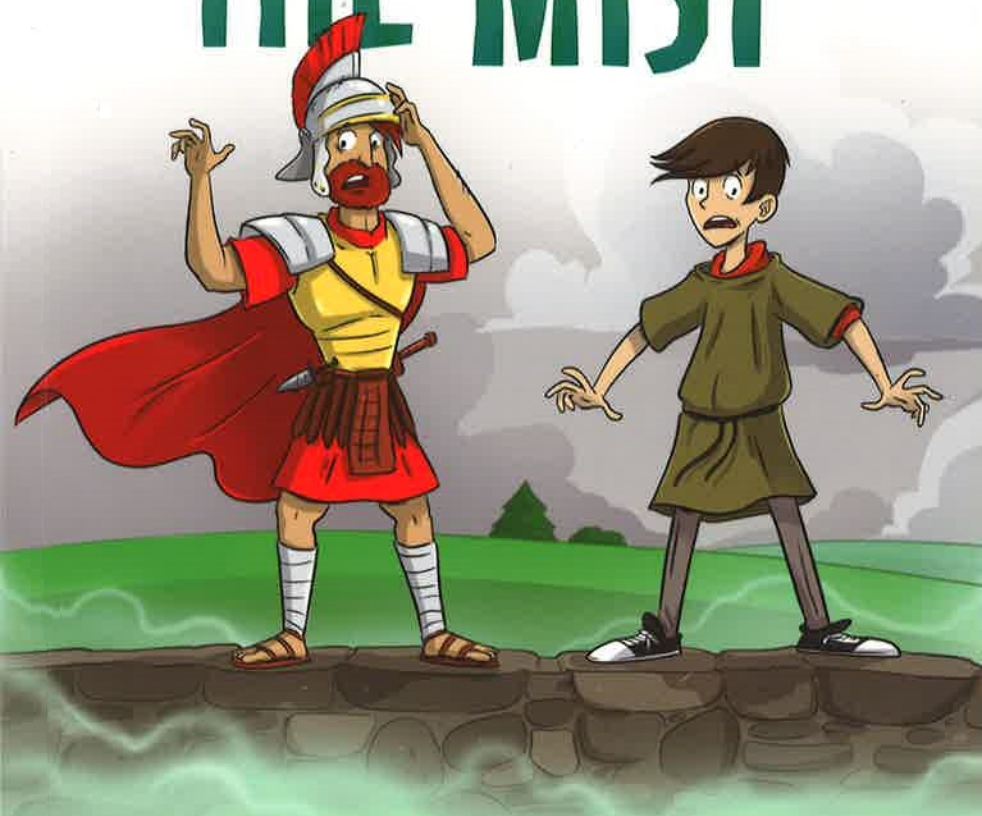
BEWARE OF THE MIST



Story by Pamela Rushby
Illustrations by James Hart

PM

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Beware of the Mist

Level 30

Running Words 9246 **Text Type** Narrative (Imaginative)

Curriculum Areas Literacy; Humanities – History

Oral Literacy Focus for Students

Key issues from the text to encourage critical thinking and stimulate group discussions:

1 Explain why Gran warned Max about the mist.

2 Discuss whether the events at the wall could have really happened

3 Identify interesting facts from the story about the Roman way of life at the time Hadrian's Wall was built.

4 Suppose that Max did not escape. Present a new ending to the story

5 Prepare a recount detailing how Max explained his experience to Gran

Written Literacy Focus for Students

Key issue from the text to present in visual and written form to an audience:

1 Research the topic 'Roman Soldiers and Hadrian's Wall'.

2 Prepare a humorous diary account by a Roman soldier when he was patrolling the wall

3 Edit and revise the text

4 Present the diary as a slide show with artwork

5 Critically evaluate your presentation.

Links with other PM Guided Reading Books and Cards

Level 30	Book	Narrative	*Riverboat Boy*
Level 30	Book	Narrative	*Passing Through*

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Chapter 1

Hadrian's Wall

It was the wettest holiday ever. Mum, Dad and I had flown all the way from Australia to visit my gran in England. As soon as we arrived, it started to rain. It rained, and rained, and rained. It rained as though it never intended to stop. Low, grey clouds rolled across the sky, day after day, like waves rolling onto a beach. It spat, and then it drizzled, and then it poured for a bit, and then it drizzled again, and then spat for a bit more. But it never actually stopped raining.

Rain isn't unusual where my gran lives, in the north of England, but this had been solid rain for a week. My gran lives in a cottage, and there's not much space inside. By the end of the week, the four of us seemed to be filling the cottage right up to the rafters in every room. You couldn't walk into a room without finding at least two other people in it, and we all had to turn sideways every time we wanted to go past someone.

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We were all fed up. Even Gran's cat was fed up, sulking and lurking up on top of the kitchen cupboards. I truly hadn't meant to step on its tail, but the cottage didn't have a lot of floor space, and the cat's tail seemed to take up a lot of it.

So when it finally stopped raining – well, not completely stopped, but sort of, almost stopped raining – Gran pushed Mum, Dad and me firmly out of the door.

"Go out," she said. "Go on out for the day. Take Max to see – to see –" Gran hesitated. She seemed to be searching for an idea.

"To see what?" I asked.



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Gran looked at me. I had a feeling she wanted to say, "Oh, to see anything! As long as it's out!" But she didn't. Instead, she said, "Take Max to see Hadrian's Wall! He'll like that. There's lots of Roman history: battles and soldiers and barbarians."

Well, I'm not too keen on history, and I was on holiday! But battles and soldiers and barbarians? That was different!

"Sounds all right," I said.

Just as we were getting into the car, Gran called to us. "How much do you know about Hadrian's Wall, Max?"

"Not much," I said. Well, not anything, actually, but I didn't want Gran to think I was dumb, did I?

Gran came out to the car. I put the window down, and she handed me a little book. "Here's some information about it," she said. "You can read it on the way, so you'll know what you're looking at." She turned to go back inside. As she reached the front door, she called out to me. I'd put the window up, so I couldn't hear her very well. I put it down again and stuck my head out.

"What did you say, Gran?" I asked.

"I said, be careful," Gran called. "If it's a misty day, be careful."

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"A misty day?" I replied, feeling puzzled.

"Yes. Mist. On the wall. Be careful. You don't want to –" I was already putting the window up, so I didn't hear what Gran said. But I nodded at her through the closed window to show I'd got the message. Mist. Be careful. Okay. I'd be careful.

Dad started the car and we drove off. We went through Gran's little village, past a shop that was also a post office, past a church and a small school, and over a stone bridge with a hump in it and out into the country. Everything was green as green – well, it would be, after all that rain. A little stream was bubbling and foaming near the road, with water right up to the banks. At some points, it poured out across the road, so we had to drive through it.

I looked at the book Gran had given me: *A Children's Guide to Hadrian's Wall*. It looked old. Dad glanced back at it. "I think that used to be mine," he said.

"So you can tell me about it, then," I said.

Dad grinned at me. "I can't remember much," he said. "I wasn't all that interested in history. I was more of a science boy, myself. Why don't you read the book and tell us about it instead?"

I sighed, opened the book and started to read.

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I found out that this wall we were going to see was called Hadrian's Wall because it was built on the orders of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. And building had started in 122 CE. I worked that out quickly. Wow! This wall was over 1800 years old!

"But why did the Romans build it?" I asked.

"The book will tell you," Mum said.

The book *did* tell me. "Hadrian's Wall was built because the Romans wanted to keep an eye on people called the Picts and the Brigantes," I read. "They were people that the Romans thought were barbarians. The wall marked the edge of the Roman Empire and was a warning to the barbarians – especially the Picts. They lived on the north of the wall, and they were especially wild and barbaric." I liked the sound of the Picts.

Then, I found out that the wall was 117 kilometres long, which was the same as 80 Roman miles, and it stretched right across Britain, from sea to sea. Wow! I thought. That is one long wall!

I read on. "Hadrian's Wall wasn't just a wall. It included buildings as well. It had 16 large forts built along it, and there was another small fort called a milecastle at each Roman mile."

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I worked out that there were about 80 milecastles. And between each pair of milecastles there were even more buildings: two small turrets. It was all built in stone by the Roman soldiers. It was 6.4 metres high, with a walkway at the 4.8-metre point so that the soldiers would be protected as they marched along, keeping watch against the barbarians.

Amazing! I thought. That is quite some wall. I was really looking forward to seeing this gigantic wall now.

"We'll be there in a minute," Dad said. "We're going to one of the forts. It's been excavated, and there's a museum there."



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Max and his family plan a trip to Hadrian's Wall in England. Just as they are leaving, Max's gran gives him a very unusual warning ... but Max doesn't listen.

Along with a tour guide called Jefficus, Max embarks on a walk along the wall. But when the mist comes in, they find themselves in a very unfamiliar time and place. Will they be able to find their way back?



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