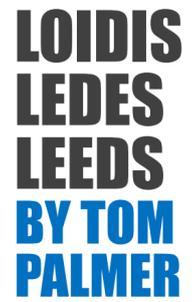


**LOIDIS
LEDES
LEEDS
BY TOM
PALMER**

Chapter one



'Does everyone have their seat belt fitted?' Miss Terry said loudly from the front of the bus.

'YES MISS!!' Thirty-one year six voices cheered back.

'Good. Well settle down and enjoy the journey. We'll be there before you know it. Today we are going to a very exciting place.'

The bus moved slowly along the school drive and onto the main road, juddering and grumbling as the driver shifted through the gears. Some children stared through the giant windows, while others fiddled with the lights and air conditioning devices above their heads.

Jack sat halfway down the bus with Mo and Nishaa, who were his friends and also his next door neighbours. Jack was excited. But not because of *where* they were going. Jack was excited just *because* they were going. Going anywhere. Away from school.

A school trip meant a journey like this on a posh coach. A school trip meant not having to look at books all day long, not being shouted at and not being sent to see the head teacher. It also meant a school pack lunch instead of a school dinner. And – best of all – a chance to mess about with his friends.

And it was a good thing that Jack, Mo and Nishaa were friends. Because this was no ordinary school trip. This journey to the Leeds City Museum was the beginning of something much more *extraordinary*.

A nightmare?

You could call it that.

It was definitely something you needed friends alongside you if you were going to make it through to the other side.

They had been at the Leeds City Museum for over an hour when Nishaa reached the Egyptian mummy in its glass case. She took one look, then turned away.

It was horrible.

Immediately Nishaa felt disappointed in herself. Disappointed because she loved the idea of being able stand next to things that were thousands of years old. Real things from ancient history. How cool was that? She'd read enough books about them to know how amazing these artefacts were.

But there was something about this mummy. Something dry and brown and rotten that made her feel sick at the same time as being fascinated. Too much like a dead body from centuries ago. Which is exactly what it was.

'Shall we go and stand outside?' Mo suggested, noticing Nishaa's reaction. 'Get some fresh air.'

'Yeah,' Nishaa agreed.

Mo led the way. Nishaa and Jack followed. Jack was ready to go too. They'd done the ancient history section – and the history of Leeds section. Both had been okay, but he'd had enough now.

Mo took his two friends down a corridor and through some glass doors. Then another corridor, which was different to the others. It had bare walls. No colourful displays. Even so, Mo felt confident that this was the way out.

Until he saw that the way was blocked by a woman wearing an old fashioned dress, long dark hair tucked neatly beneath a wide-brimmed hat. She was also wearing a purple ribbon across her coat.

The corridor felt suddenly cold. Mo shivered.

'Hello,' the woman said, addressing all three of them.

'Er... hi,' Mo said.

'How are you enjoying the museum, children?'

'Good thanks,' Nishaa said.

'Well, it's not *that* good,' Jack contradicted. He felt tired and grumpy now. He just wanted to be on the bus home.

'Did you enjoy the gallery about Leeds and its history?' the woman asked.

'It was okay,' Mo replied. 'But we didn't really stop for too long.'

'That's a shame,' the woman said. 'Don't you want to know about the history of your city?'

'Not really,' Jack answered.

The woman said nothing. She just looked at the three children, one after the other.

None of them quite understood who she was, until Nishaa had a thought. Something she remembered from a London museum her dad had taken her to in the summer holidays.

'Are you one of those actors,' Nishaa asked, 'who walks round museums and pretends to be someone from the past? So that visitors can ask questions.'

'You could say that,' the woman smiled. 'But I'm not sure there's much reason to. Not if you don't care about the history of your city.'

'But I do,' Nishaa said.

'Me too,' Mo echoed.

Jack said nothing.

The woman smiled again. Nishaa thought she had a lovely smile. One of the kindest smiles she'd ever seen on someone.

'So *can* we ask you questions?' Nishaa pressed.

'You could... but I think... I think instead, I am going to ask *you* some questions. What if I set you a challenge? The three of you?'

'Yeah!' Jack said, suddenly enthusiastic. 'Is there a prize?'

'Yes,' the woman said. 'There is.'

'Go on then,' Jack said.

'What if I said to you,' the woman began, 'that if you accept my challenge and prove to me that children *are* interested in their city's history, then something amazing will happen in Leeds? That something unbelievable will be discovered to prove a part of the city's history that no one ever imagined has happened, something that has been lost for two thousand years? And that it would all be down to you three.'

Jack looked quickly from Nishaa to Mo, then back to Nishaa.

'Come on,' Jack whispered.

'What?' Nishaa asked.

'Let's do it,' Mo added.

Nishaa could hear that Mo and Jack were up for it. The looks on their faces gave it away too. They looked like two dogs desperate to go out for a walk. Nishaa sighed. She felt nervous about what they were getting themselves into. This woman did not really seem to her like one of those museum actors who pretend to be someone from the past. There was something about her. Something strange.

Nishaa shivered.

'Right then,' the lady said. 'Are you ready?'

'Yeah,' Nishaa spoke for all of them. 'We are.'

'If you accept,' the woman said, 'for the next four nights, a ghost will visit one of you and it will set you all a challenge.'

'A ghost?' Nishaa asked.

The lady nodded, then went on. 'A challenge to find out something about the history of Leeds. If you accept and solve the first, you will then be set another, until you finish all four. And, if you succeed in that, you will ensure that an amazing discovery will be revealed about Leeds. If you fail, then the amazing discovery will remain hidden forever.'

Jack was shaking his head. 'Ghosts?' he stuttered.

'Yes,' the woman said.

'But... there's no such thing as ghost.'

'Really?'

'Really,' Jack said, his face rigid. 'I know there are no such things as ghost. I know it for sure.'

'And how do you know that?' the lady asked.

'Because,' Jack said, 'because when I was five my dad died and if there were ghosts...'

'Year Six?' Miss Terry broke the spell in the tension with a harsh shout. 'All Year Six to the main staircase on the ground floor, please. Mo? Nishaa? Jack? Where are you?'

'We have to go,' Nishaa said to the woman.

The woman put her hands together. 'Goodbye children,' she said. 'But before you go, I need to know if you accept my challenge?'

Mo, Nishaa and Jack looked at each other. They didn't need to say anything. They all knew what the other two wanted to do. Even Jack.

'Yes,' Nishaa turned to the woman and grinned. 'We accept the challenge.'

As they walked, Mo couldn't help but wonder what Jack had been about to say about his dad and about ghosts. But it was too late now. He could see that Miss Terry was cross. You could tell that by the shape of her mouth and the look in her eyes. And by the fact that she was apologising to the museum guide. His name was Hardit.

'Where have you three been?' Mrs Terry asked.

The two adults were standing in the entrance hall, at the top of a wide staircase with the rest of year six clustered in the entrance. Light poured in through the museum windows. Ahead of them the main hall of the museum was bright with colour and vibrant images.

'Sorry Miss,' Nishaa said. 'We were talking to the actress lady. About Leeds.'

'Actress lady?' Hardit sounded confused.

'The lady in the corridor near the mummy and the Leeds exhibition,' Mo said.

'She was quite nice,' Jack added.

Hardit shook his head. 'We... don't... have any actors. I'm the only guide working today.'

'Yes you do,' Nishaa said. 'She's wearing a long old fashioned dress and a hat.'

'No-one's doing that today,' Hardit said firmly.

Miss Terry crouched slightly to be level with the three children. Eye to eye, Mo, Jack and Nishaa looked back at her.

'Can you show Hardit where this lady is?' their teacher asked in a soft voice now.

As the coach pulled away from the Leeds City Museum, past the First Direct Arena, the three children were quiet as their classmates chattered excitedly about the trip they'd just been on.

With the help of Miss Terry and Hardit, they had not been able to relocate the lady in the museum. It was like she had just disappeared.

Ten minutes into the journey, Mo was the first of the trio to speak. He had been going over and over what had happened in his head. The woman. What she had said. The challenge. And the things about ghosts.

Was it all a joke?

Probably.

But there was a chance it was real.

'So, er, what do we do now?' Mo asked.

'About what?' Jack snapped. Mo noted Jack looked grumpy. Again.

'Nothing,' Nishaa said. 'We do nothing.'

'Nothing?' Mo disagreed. 'But what if the things that the lady said were going to happen really *do* happen?'

'What?' Jack laughed. 'Ghosts coming to us in the night? I don't think so. There is no such thing as ghosts. She was a nutter. She didn't hang around once we got Miss and the museum guy, did she?'

'I don't know,' Mo said.

'What do you mean?' Nishaa asked.

'I mean... are you two completely sure that one of us isn't going to wake up in the night with a ghost stood at the end of our bed?'

That's the end of chapter one.

The children are on their way back to school where they'll be collected by their parents and taken home. It's February, so it'll be dark just after six. They'll be in bed by nine. Lights out. The long dark Leeds winter night about to begin.

And in the dark, Mo, Nishaa and Jack's thoughts will turn to what the lady in the museum said. About ghosts. And they might think about who the lady was and why she disappeared.

They might think that *she* was a ghost. Was she?

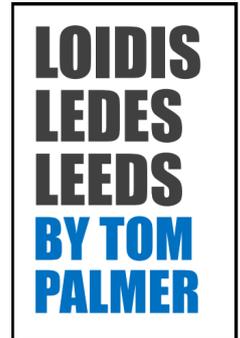
And will one of them wake up in the night and find themselves face to face with a ghost?
In... Their... Bedroom...

Find out in next week's chapter. And, in the meantime, sleep well.

To find out more about this story please visit www.tompalmer.co.uk/leeds-sls.

Chapter two

When Nishaa, Mo and Jack visited the City of Leeds Museum on a school trip, they met a lady who set them a challenge. A challenge that they accepted. The woman said that a ghost would visit each of the children over the next four nights. Each ghost would set them a puzzle. And if they solved each puzzle, it would mean that something amazing about the history of their city – Leeds – would be revealed. But things like ghosts visiting children never really happen, do they?



When Nishaa woke she knew that she was not alone. She could hear a rustle of material and the soft breaths of someone standing at the end of her bed.

Nishaa kept her eyes screwed tight for a few moments. If she did not open them and pretended to be asleep then nothing would happen. But it was too cold for sleep. Cold like at the museum yesterday. And Nishaa knew what that meant. Her mind was working overtime now. What if there *was* someone at the end of her bed? A dead someone?

A ghost.

And if this *was* a ghost, she thought, it had come to set her a challenge, not scare her or curse her or kill her. And, if that was the case, then the woman in in the museum must have been a ghost too and *she* was alright. She didn't hurt Nishaa. So maybe ghosts *could* be okay. If they needed your help.

The ghost was waiting for her: Nishaa could sense that. She had to make a decision.

See who was there?

Or play dead?

Nishaa took a deep breath, then opened her eyes.

There was a girl by the window, standing in front of Nishaa's poster of Jessica Ennis. Underneath the three shelves of books that Nishaa had collected – and read – over the last few years. Except Nishaa could still see the image of Jessica Ennis. *Through* the girl. The poster was flickering. Or the girl was. And there was a buzzing sound, like the air was charged with a strange electricity. But Nishaa put all of that out of her mind.

She swallowed and faced her ghost.

The ghost girl was smiling. She was wearing a long red dress or apron, over a white-sleeved top. But the clothes made of old rough materials. She had a rough leather belt tied around the apron and with bare feet.

'Hi,' Nishaa said. She was determined not to show that she was scared. 'I'm Nishaa.'

'I am Brida,' the girl said.

'Welcome,' Nishaa replied, then realised she was too nervous to say anything else. So she waited to hear what the girl had to say.

'I lived in a place called Elmet many years ago,' the girl began. 'Our men made tools and weapons with iron. We lived in a place that was higher than the flat land to the east, where the sun rises. Remains of our fort are still there today. Will you find my place before the sun sets today?'

'Yes. I will.' Nishaa replied without thinking how she could do that or how difficult it would be. She just said yes. She felt she had to.

Almost immediately, the girl bowed and faded, just as the air began to feel warmer. Soon she was gone and Nishaa was alone again.

Disappointed.

She would have liked to talk to the girl some more.

But as soon as the girl had vanished, Nishaa rushed to her bedside table and wrote down what she had said. Word for word.

'Is that all she said?' Mo asked. 'It's not much to go on.'

Nishaa had summoned Mo and Jack to the small playground opposite their houses. The two boys sat on swings staring at Nishaa as she paced up and down.

'Were you scared?' Jack wanted to know.

Nishaa shook her head, then told the boys exactly what had happened. 'And that was it,' Nishaa said. 'And, no, I wasn't scared. Not really. Not once I saw her. She was nice. She smiled at me.'

'Nice?' Jack said in a weak voice.

'Yeah nice.'

'But you said she was a ghost.'

'I know.'

'I don't understand.'

'So, tell us what she said again,' Mo interrupted.

'I keep a notebook by my bed, so wrote it down,' Nishaa explained, taking a piece of folded paper from her pocket. 'She said "I lived in a place called Elmet many years ago. Our men made tools

and weapons with iron. We lived in a place that was higher than the flat land to the east, where the sun rises. Remains of our fort are still there today. Will you find my place before the sun sets today”.’

Now it's your turn. What do you think the clue means? Can you find a place in Leeds that fits the description? Have a go as a group before you read on. And see if you found out what Mo, Nishaa and Jack did.

They took the number 64 bus from the city centre. Mo and Nishaa's parents said that they could make the trip so long as they always stuck together, played by the usual rules and stayed in touch by mobile phone. Jack's mum was out, so he decided to just go with his friends.

The usual rules for Mo and Nishaa. But not for Jack. This was all very new to him. And, because of that, he was nervous. But he said nothing about that. He just stayed close to his two friends, making sure he wasn't left behind.

The number 64 left Leeds on York Road, dozens of cars and trucks jostling east along three lanes of traffic. The children sat at the back of the bus, so that they could face each other. Even though it was busy on the roads, the bus was quiet inside.

Their destination: the Iron Age fort at Barwick-in-Elmet.

'So what do we do when we get there?' Jack asked.

'Climb it,' Nishaa said. 'Stand on the top.'

'Do you think she'll be there?' Mo asked Nishaa.

'Who?'

'Your ghost.'

Nishaa shrugged. 'I don't know.'

'Will we know we're in the right place?' Mo asked.

'How can I answer that?' Nishaa snapped. 'I know as much as you.'

After the main road and a couple of roundabouts – twenty minutes into the bus ride – they hit countryside. Fewer houses. More fields and trees and hedges.

'So is this still Leeds?' Jack asked. Nishaa could hear he sounded nervous.

'Yeah,' she replied.

'I didn't know there were fields and countryside. And look! Is that a farm?'

'Have you never seen a farm before?' Mo laughed.

'No,' Jack said, his voice quiet.

'Have you never come out of the city?' Nishaa asked the next question.

Jack shook his head. He was staring out of the window. And for a couple of minutes all three of them did the same.

Then, in the distance, Nishaa saw a raised piece of land.

‘That’s it,’ she gasped. ‘The fort.’

The bus slowed down and the driver called to the back of the bus. ‘This is the stop you want kids. The path up the hill is just through that gate.’

It wasn’t a big hill. But it was quite steep. Even so, Jack ran on ahead, desperate to see the view from the top. The countryside was amazing. So was the sky. He felt excited and full of energy. But when he got to the top he heard a voice calling out.

‘Jack! Come here. Now.’

Jack froze. He felt sick. Was there a teacher after him? Or worse?

What had he done wrong?

Suddenly two dogs, black and white, raced up to join him. One leaped up at Jack and tried to lick his face.

Then a voice.

‘Jack... Dave... come here.’ A woman in a purple coat appeared on the path.

Jack stared at her in horror. Who was she?

‘I’m so sorry,’ the woman said. She had a kind face. ‘Jack. Here. Now. I’m sorry, young man. I apologise.’

Nishaa and Mo had caught up. And Nishaa understood why Jack looked so freaked out.

‘No worries,’ Nishaa said. ‘The dogs are funny. And my friend is called Jack too. I think he thought...’

‘Oh, I’m so sorry Jack. I must have scared you.’ The woman looked apologetic, but she was smiling a bit too.

‘It’s okay,’ Jack said, playing with one of the dogs.

‘That one’s Jack,’ the woman said. ‘I think he likes you.’

The three children laughed.

The woman breathed out and smiled. ‘It’s lovely today. Have you come or a look at the fort?’

‘Yes. Is this it?’

‘It is. It’s very important. It used to be an Iron Age fort. People lived in little houses around here. And if there was any trouble, they would all come into the fort to be safe.’

'So, if it was Iron Age, does that mean they made things with iron?' Nishaa asked.

'It does,' Pauline said. 'It was a long time ago, but it's a very important part of Leeds' history.'

It wasn't long before the bus into town was back on the busy main road, buildings either side, a hospital, a petrol station, no more fields and farms and cows. Pretty soon the children stopped looking out of the bus window. The bus was warm. Over-heated. And empty.

Jack spoke first. 'So do you think we did it?'

'Did what?' Mo asked.

'Passed the first challenge. Got one step closer to finding out what this great Leeds history thing is.'

'Get the clue out again,' Mo said.

Nishaa unfolded her piece of paper and passed it to Mo.

'Weapons made from iron,' Mo mused. 'That's Iron Age. And the fort was Iron Age first of all. And it had Elmet in its name. The nice lady we met at the top said that.'

'And it was a high spot, with flat land to the east,' Nishaa added.

'And it's not dark yet, so it's before sunset,' Mo said

'Yay! We did it,' Nishaa echoed.

Jack remained silent.

Mo looked at the other two. 'But how do we know we did it?' he said. 'For sure.'

'Because we did what we were asked,' Nishaa grinned.

'There was no sign,' Jack said. His arms were folded tight across his chest now.

'There doesn't have to be a sign,' Mo said. 'I suppose we'll really know when...'

'... one of you get a ghost in the morning,' Nishaa interrupted.

Mo nodded.

'Not to me,' Jack said.

'What?'

'I'm not getting a ghost coming to me,' Jack scowled.

'Why not you?' Mo asked.

'Because there's no such thing,' Jack replied.

That's the end of chapter two.

Soon the children will go their separate ways, to their homes. Lights out again. They think they've solved the first puzzle, but they don't know for sure. They'll only know the following day after one of them is visited by a ghost. If they are visited.

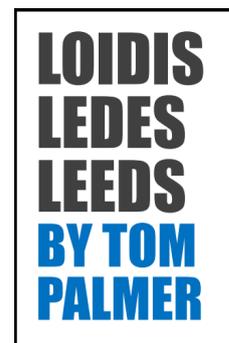
But will they be visited? And – if they are – who will the ghost visit?

Find out in next week's episode.

Chapter three

Having been set a challenge to find out about the history of their city, Nishaa, Mo and Jack have agreed to be visited by four ghosts who will set them challenges to find important historical things out about their city. They think they have solved the first one, by visiting an Iron Age fort in Barwick in Elmet. But they won't know for sure until one of them wakes up with a ghost in their house, setting them the next challenge.

But who will it be?



Mo woke up at a five-thirty the next morning. It was still dark outside. Very dark.

He could hear a tap-tapping on the window pane. Not someone knocking to come in. It was only the rain. Mo knew that. Anyway, it was nearly dawn and ghosts were meant to come at night. So Mo figured that Jack would be the one visited by the second ghost.

A part of Mo was pleased that he had not had to face a ghost. How would he would have explained it to his two younger brothers who were sharing the single bed barely a metre across the room from his own bed? They'd be bound to wake up once he started talking – or the ghost did.

Another part of Mo wished the ghost *had* come to him. If it was Jack's turn today, he could be being haunted right now – if he hadn't already been haunted. And Mo knew Jack was terrified of a ghost coming to him. He had seen it in his eyes as they parted the night before.

Poor Jack.

Mo's brother turned over in his sleep and Mo realised he was disturbing him just by being awake, so he eased himself out of bed, put on his socks, jeans and a hoody, which were on the floor by his bed, and slipped out of the bedroom into the corridor.

It was cold in the house. And dark. So dark that Mo had to feel his way to the bannisters, for fear of falling down the uncarpeted wooden steps. He moved slowly down the stairs, trying to tread on the best steps – the ones that didn't creak. He didn't want to wake his dad. Never a good idea. His dad liked his sleep.

Mo didn't switch any lights on.

Into the narrow hallway, a short walk on more floorboards, then Mo opened the kitchen door slowly, doing everything he could to be quiet. He'd have a drink and wait downstairs until the rest of his family were awake.

'GREETINGS!'

Mo leaped back into the hall and slammed the door shut. His heart was hammering. His legs gone to jelly. The voice had been loud and deep and he had seen someone in there. A huge man. Accompanied by a loud buzzing noise. With a light around him too. Light that was now seeping under the door. Light that seemed to be getting brighter.

‘Mohammed?’ Dad’s voice called from upstairs, woken by the door slamming shut. Not good. Mo was in trouble. But what could he do? Go back upstairs and face the music? Or find out who it was that was in the kitchen?

Mo took a deep breath. This was frightening. But Nishaa had done it and she had been fine. And Mo desperately didn’t want to let his friends down. So he stared at the light under the door, put his hand on the door handle, turned it and pushed the door open.

The man was standing with his feet apart. In his left hand he held a large hammer, in his right a chisel. He was wearing a rough heavy apron. His face and forearms were covered in a fine dust. He had cuts on his hands.

‘Greetings!’ he said, more quietly, above the buzzing sound.

‘Er... greetings,’ Mo replied, shutting the door behind him. His voice trembled in his throat.

The man hesitated, then spoke. ‘Do you fear me?’

‘A bit,’ Mo managed to say.

‘Do not fear me.’

‘Okay,’ Mo breathed in. ‘I’ll try.’

The man cleared his throat. ‘I am Oluf,’ he boomed. ‘Like you, my family came from a land far away across the sea. But this is my country now, as it is yours. I bring to this country many things. Viking names. Viking stories. And, near to here, a cross that I carved myself. It tells a story about my homeland. About a man who could fly. You must find the cross and understand it.’

‘Did you stay here?’ Mo asked the man. Even before Mo had asked his question, the Viking had already begun to disappear, like Nishaa had said her Iron Age girl had faded.

Mo was thinking about his own family. His mum and dad had come to the UK from Somalia before he was born. Away from trouble at home. He’d asked the question because he wanted to know if the man had stayed in the UK. Like his mum and dad wanted *them* to stay. Or did he go home?

The man became vivid again. He had heard Mo’s question. Wanted to answer.

‘I did stay here,’ he replied. ‘Yes. And my children and children’s children have made this place home for centuries. Like yours will, my boy.’

Mo smiled at the Viking, who faded more quickly and bowed just before he disappeared completely.

Then Mo went over what the man had said to him in his mind. So that he would remember it.

The Viking had carved a cross.

The cross told a story.

About a man who could fly.

And that – if Mo and his friends found the cross – they must understand it.

Later that morning Mo described the ghost to Nishaa and Jack, laughing because he was relieved it had not been as frightening as he had thought it would.

They were sitting in Mo's front room. Nishaa in the one arm chair. Mo and Jack on wooden chairs.

'What did he say?' Jack asked, leaning forward.

'He said that he was from another country,' Mo recalled. 'And that his children's children live here now. That they are part of this country.'

Nishaa smiled. 'Like me,' she said. Mo knew Nishaa's great-grandparents had come to Leeds from India in the 1950s.

'And me,' Jack said.

'You?' Nishaa said. 'Where did your family come from?'

'I dunno. But I could be a Viking's son's son's son's son's son. Why not? When we did it in school the teacher said everyone in Leeds is made up of bits of people from all over Europe and the world. There was a time that no-one lived here.'

'That's true,' Nishaa laughed. 'What else?' she asked Mo.

'He said that he brought this country names and stories. And that he carved a cross that tells a story about his homeland. About a man who could fly.'

'So we have to find a cross with a story on?' Jack asked.

'Yeah. I suppose.'

'Where's your computer?' Nishaa asked.

'We er... don't have one yet,' Mo said. 'Can we go to yours, Nishaa?'

Now it's your turn. What do you think the clue means? Can you find a place in Leeds that fits the description? Have a go as a group before you read on. And see if you can find out what Mo, Nishaa and Jack discover.

As they walked down Vicar Lane towards the church, Mo examined the faces of people coming the other way. He wanted to see if they looked like the Viking who had come to him in his kitchen that morning.

Some had blond hair. Other great big noses, pale white skin. Mo smiled. The Viking might have been right. He wondered how many generations had passed since the Vikings – and if, by now, like Jack had said, everyone in Leeds had a bit of Viking in them.

They walked past the market, two women wheeling boxes from a van and into the main door. Down to the main bus station and under a railway bridge and there it was. Mo felt excited. He was desperate to see the cross his Viking had carved.

The Leeds Minster was huge with a great tower at the centre, a clock telling the time to the whole city.

'But are we allowed in?' Jack asked. 'What if we're not allowed in?'

'Everyone is allowed into our mosque anytime,' Mo said. 'Aren't churches like that?'

Nishaa shrugged. She didn't know.

They walked up some stone steps towards a huge wooden door. The church loomed over them.

'Are we allowed?' Jack asked Nishaa and Mo again.

'Yes. Please come in,' the lady on the other side of the door said. 'How can I help you, kids?'

Mo explained. They wanted to see the cross. The one with the story about the Vikings on it. They'd been told about it by a friend. Looked it up on the internet.

The lady smiled and led them to the left, through a couple of doors and onto some steps at one end of the church. The sun was streaming through huge stained glass windows, casting a beautiful light on the church's benches, flowers and statues.

And then they saw it. In the huge space at the top end of the church. As tall as the three of them if they were to stand on each other's heads, it was a stone column with a circle and cross at the top. Figures were carved into the stone. As well as intricate designs.

'It's sick,' Jack said. Though he had thought it would be made of wood. He was amazed it was not.

Mo and Nishaa watched Jack walk around it, looking at it from every angle. It towered over Jack. 'Your ghost made this,' Jack said to Mo.

'He said so,' Mo agreed.

Nishaa found an information board on the wall. She read it, then pointed to the strange carving of a figure at the bottom.

'Who is he?' Mo asked.

'His name is Welland. He was a Viking. He built a flying machine.'

'That's him then,' Mo clapped his hands together. 'That answers the puzzle. We've done it.'

'Great,' Jack said. 'So we've seen it. Let's go.'

'Not yet,' Mo said.

He said it loud and it echoed around the inside of the church.

'He said something else,' Mo went on.

'Who?'

'Oluf. The Viking.'

'What?'

'That we had to understand it. Not just see it. The cross.'

'Eh?' Jack said. 'It's a cross. What's to understand?'

'The story.'

Mo knelt and looked at the cross. 'It's a story about the Vikings and it's in Leeds because they came here across the sea and stayed here.'

'And they still do,' Nishaa added. 'Like your family. And mine. It means Leeds is made up of lots of different people. Like you said, Jack. From lots of different places.'

The sky was darkening when the three children emerged from Leeds Minster. Mo looked back. He felt good. He'd found the cross the ghost Viking had said he'd carved. How amazing was that? He was loving this challenge. He turned to smile at Jack, as they walked back up to the centre of town.

But Jack was frowning.

'We did it, Jack,' Mo nudged his friend. 'And you understood it too.'

'Maybe not,' Jack said. 'Nothing happened, did it? There was no sign we did it. Maybe that's it. Maybe it's over.'

Nishaa put her hand on Jack's shoulder. She had worked out why Jack was in a funny mood. 'It's alright,' she said. 'When the ghosts come. They just tell you something, then vanish. They can't hurt you.'

'I'm not scared of ghosts,' Jack said, speeding up, then breaking into a run. 'I've just had enough of this stupid challenge. I'm finished with it.'

As Mo watched Jack go, something came back into his mind. Jack talking about his dad at the museum. How his dad had died. And Mo was sure that the two things were linked.

That's the end of chapter three. The children seem to have solved two of the four challenges the ghosts have set for them. They are doing well.

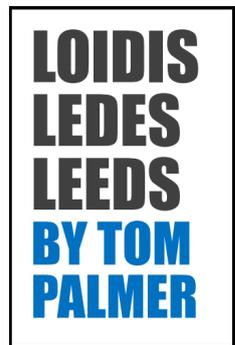
But Jack is not happy. If it is his turn to be visited by a ghost does it matter that he says he does not think that ghosts exist? And if he doesn't really believe in them, why is he so scared?

Chapter four

Nishaa and Mo have been visited by two ghosts. Each ghost has set the three children a challenge. To find something out about the history of Leeds. Their quest is to solve four clues to reveal something amazing about their city that will only be revealed if they succeed.

But the third ghost presents a problem. That if it shows itself to Jack he may be either too scared to listen to it – or that he does not believe.

Jack must face his ghost or the whole quest is under threat.



In the school holidays Jack was always allowed to sleep in his dad's shed.

His dad died when Jack was five. A heart attack. Now the shed was Jack's shed, though he still called it his dad's shed.

The main reason Jack wanted the shed was because of his dad. But there was another reason he liked it.

Jack had heard at school that Roald Dahl had had a shed which he used to write in. Roald Dahl was dead too. But Jack liked Roald Dahl films. Like *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Fantastic Mr Fox*. Jack liked Roald Dahl because most of his books had been made into films. *Esio Trot* had been on the TV at Christmas. Once Jack had seen the film he could pretend he'd read the book. Which was good, because Jack hated reading. Hated it so much it made his eyes hurt and made him dizzy.

Anyway, no-one else had wanted the shed.

'Jack?' a voice from the dark.

Jack heard it, but pretended not to. It was two in the morning. He knew it was a ghost. His ghost.

'Jack?' A child's voice. That's what it sounded like.

Jack lay still. He was not going to talk to the ghost. Or look at it. It wasn't there. Ghosts didn't exist. Full stop.

'Jackie?'

Jack twitched. He hated being called Jackie now. His dad had called him that and no-one else was allowed to. He screwed his eyes tight and curled up.

If ghosts did exist, he said to himself, then his dad would have been to see him. But his dad hadn't been to see him. Not once. So ghosts didn't exist, did they? Because if they did he would have been. And, if he had not been to see Jack, then why not? That's why they didn't exist.

'I am the son of a Roman centurion,' the ghost that wasn't there said. 'My father was based at a great palace called Cambodnum. But he was killed fighting against the Scots. He was buried north of Cambodnum. I need you to find his coffin.'

Jack listened carefully. Each word burned itself into his mind. He thought about what the ghost that wasn't there was saying. About his Roman dad. And about the fact that the not-ghost had called him Jackie. Like his own dad used to...

Jack gasped and leaped up, eyes wide open.

'Wait!' he shouted. 'Where are you?'

But Jack could see nothing except the walls of his dad's shed in the half light.

'My dad died too,' Jack said.

But his ghost had gone.

They met in the shed. Straight after breakfast. Although Jack had not had breakfast.

He told the others what the ghost had said. That they had to find the coffin of a Roman centurion.

'What did he look like?' Nishaa asked.

'Just a boy,' Jack said.

'Was he wearing one of those sheets?' Mo asked. 'A toga?'

Jack shrugged.

'Did you even see him?' Nishaa asked.

'It was dark,' Jack lied.

Nishaa screwed up her face. Jack knew that she didn't believe him. But he didn't want to admit that he had been too scared to open his eyes.

Then Mo was talking. 'Coffin. Coffin. Yes... Do you remember when we went to the library with school and that librarian gave us a tour and she showed us some books about local history? There was a blue one. For kids. It had loads of photos in it of old stuff from Leeds. I think we've got it in the school library too. It was only the second week I was at school,' Mo said.

'Yeah.'

'Well we need to find that book,' Mo said. 'I'm sure there was a picture of a coffin in it.'

Now it's your turn. What do you think the clue means? Can you find a place in Leeds that fits the description? Have a go as a group before you read on. And see if you found out what Mo, Nishaa and Jack did.

The three children walked to the library. Jack felt nervous. He'd only ever been to the library with school. Never on his own – or with an adult. It had a wide front door, great big windows and bright coloured furniture inside

'Are we allowed in?' Jack asked. 'Just us, I mean?'

'Course we are,' Nishaa laughed. 'My dad brings me here all the time. Since I was a baby. But I come on my own too. Don't you?'

Jack shook his head.

Mo – walking just behind them – wanted to ask Jack why he always worried if they were allowed into places that he thought most kids would know they were allowed into. But he decided not to. Not now, anyway.

Nishaa marched into the library. Mo followed with Jack trailing at the back now.

'Ask at the counter,' Mo suggested.

'I don't need to,' Nishaa said. 'I can find it.'

Mo and Jack waited as Nishaa scanned the shelves. She looked very much as if she knew what she was doing. The two boys caught each other's eye at one point and smiled. Neither of them was going to interrupt Nishaa's search. The library was bigger than a school class room and was full of shelves of colourful books about football, spies, different countries. Also magazines, newspapers and internet terminals.

Then a voice from behind them.

'Hello.'

Jack turned, half hoping it was the Roman boy. But it wasn't a boy. It was a young woman with light curly hair. 'Can I help you? I'm Kirsty. I work here.'

'Erm... think we've come for a book,' Jack said clumsily.

'Then you've come to the right place,' Kirsty said, smiling. 'What sort of book?'

'A history book about Leeds... please.'

Kirsty smiled. And Jack felt okay. This woman was being nice to him.

Before long, Kirsty returned with a blue book, a soldier on the front. Its title was *A Children's History of Leeds*.

'That's the one,' Mo cried out, taking the book. 'Page four. Page four.'

'Thanks,' Jack said to Kirsty.

Another bus out of Leeds. A single decker this time. The number 28. Up past the great white tower of the university. Along roads with enormous houses on either side. Over a giant roundabout made up of four lanes of traffic – each way. And then small country lanes.

But Jack was not taking in the houses and the roads. He was thinking. Thinking that desperately wanted to see the ghost that had visited him. The ghost whose dad had died. The ghost who was like him, looking for his dad. And all the time excited because he had never believed in ghosts and now he did and he wanted to know what it was like to be a ghost.

But he kept his thoughts deep inside. He didn't want his friends to think he was stupid.

Once they knew they were near Adel Church, Jack pulled the *Children's History of Leeds* out of his plastic bag. On page four there was a picture of the stone coffin they were looking for.

'This is it,' he said. 'Okay? We have to find this.'

The bus dropped them next to a cricket club. It was surrounded by fields and tall dark trees. And sky. A huge blue sky full of birds and clouds.

As soon as they were off the bus, Jack was scanning the fields and roadsides for someone who looked Roman. He needed to see his ghost. He felt like he could handle it now that he was with his friends. And now that it was light.

Nishaa was looking at the bus stop sign. It listed the buses back into Leeds City Centre.

'There's a bus back to Leeds in seven minutes,' she said. 'And it's the last one. We have to hurry.'

'I can see the church,' Mo added. 'Let's look inside.'

The three children jogged towards the church. At the entrance – where a long stone path led directly to the small church – there was a set of stone steps that had once been used so that churchgoers could climb onto their horses. That's what Nishaa said. She'd seen one at a big country house she had visited once.

Jack stood to stare at it. He couldn't believe that before cars and buses, people came to church on horses. Did people use it in Roman times? he wondered. Then he stared at the church.

Lights were illuminating its walls now. The shafts of light making the trees look magical as daylight faded.

Mo and Nishaa walked on, but Jack stood deep in thought,

The other two were nearly half way along the path when they heard Jack call out. He was still gazing at the beautiful church, surrounded by fields of grass and grave stones. It was so amazing, he had to just stand and stare.

That was when he saw them.

'Wait!' he shouted.

Nishaa turned round to see Jack standing at the entrance. 'We don't have time, Jack. Less than five minutes now.'

But Jack was pointing to a cluster of stone pieces on the grass. Two large circles or wheels. And three rectangles.

'I think I've found them,' Jack grinned. 'They're here.'

Nishaa and Mo rushed up to the stone pieces. Three were clearly coffins. Jack got his library book out again and compared the coffins on the ground to the one in the book.

'This is it,' he said. 'The boy's dad's coffin.'

Jack felt a strange feeling going through him. It was like sadness, but sort of happiness too. He scanned the graveyard again and wished the boy would appear.

But he didn't.

'We'd better get the bus,' Mo said after they had taken photos of the coffin.

'I want to stay for a bit,' Jack said. 'I think we need to stay for a bit. To make sure they know we're here.'

Nishaa shook her head. 'We have to catch the bus. Get back to Leeds.'

Mo and Nishaa walked towards the road. Jack hesitated, knelt down and touched the Roman coffin.

'Sorry,' he said. Then he ran to catch up with his friends, with a deep down feeling that they should have stayed for longer, should have looked properly.

That is the end of chapter four.

The children are one clue away from completing the challenge that the lady in the City of Leeds Museum set them. But Jack is worried. Perhaps they have not solved all three. He felt sure that he should have seen the ghosts of the child who came to his dad's shed. Everything felt wrong. But now they are on the bus back to Leeds and there is no going back. The question is, will

a fourth ghost come. And, if it does, they have what it takes to solve the last puzzle and reveal the amazing thing about Leeds' history that has never been revealed before?

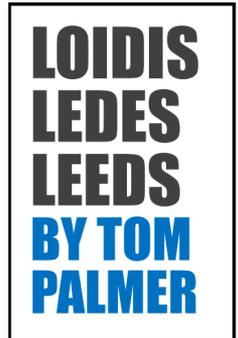
Chapter five

Jack, Nishaa and Mo have solved three of the challenges set by the ghosts that have visited them. But Jack is worried. Because Jack thinks he has messed everything up because he had been too scared to look at the ghost that came to see him in his dad's shed.

The trio have only to solve one more clue to help uncover something amazing about Leeds' history.

But will a fourth ghost come?

And, if it doesn't does that mean the trio have blown it?



Nishaa's alarm went off at six. Wide awake immediately, she frowned. No ghost. Nothing. She had really wanted the last ghost to come to her. She wondered which of the boys would be visited.

Mo was woken by his younger brother falling out of bed. He laughed and got up. Six-fifteen. He wanted to check the kitchen before anyone else was awake. Mo walked carefully across the bedroom floor, nearly walking on his youngest brother's pile of Shopkins. Mo eased the door shut and walked downstairs into the kitchen. But there was no ghost there.

There were no curtains in Jack's dad's shed. He woke when a ray of sunshine sliced through the window. Ten past seven. He, too, had wanted the last ghost to come to him. Because he had wanted it to be the Roman boy.

They gathered in the park at nine. As they had agreed to do the night before.

'Neither of you had a ghost come to you?' Nishaa asked.

The two boys shook their heads.

'None of us, then?' she went on. 'What does that mean?'

'We've failed,' Jack said mournfully.

'What?'

'We've failed because I didn't look at my ghost and because we didn't stay long enough at his dad's coffin.'

'Rubbish,' Mo said.

Nishaa didn't speak.

'It's my fault,' Jack said.

'No it isn't,' Mo said.

'What do we do?' Nishaa asked.

The three of them stood in silence. Surrounded by the sounds of the city. And a plane descending from out of the clouds, heading for Leeds Bradford Airport.

'We go back to the museum,' Mo said after a few moments. 'We see if that woman is there again. We've done well. Three ghosts out of four. We shouldn't give up.'

The three children searched museum for an hour. But after an hour they gave up. The woman they had met on the school trip was not there. It was over.

'I'm hungry,' Jack said.

'Have you got any money?' Mo asked.

'A bit,' Jack said.

'Me too,' Nishaa said. 'Let's see what we've got.'

MacDonalds was quiet. The one in the Leeds City station opposite a café called Pret.

Once they'd been served, the children went to sit down. They found a seat near a mother and son who had their backs to the rest of the restaurant. The boy was wearing hoody, his face concealed.

'I'm sorry,' Jack said.

'What?' Mo and Nishaa said it at once, together.

'It was me. I've spoiled it. I was too chicken to look at my ghost. I'm stupid. I'm just sorry.'

'First thing is it's not your fault,' Mo said.

'Yeah,' Nishaa agreed. 'You got the clue, you found the book, then the coffin.'

Jack shrugged.

The mother and son were standing now, putting coats on, picking up bags, ready to leave.

'We must sound weird,' Mo said, glancing at them.

'Not really,' the woman said as she stopped at their table.

Nishaa, Mo and Jack looked up and gasped. Speechless.

It was her. The woman from the museum. But she was wearing jeans and a tee-shirt now. A leather jacket.

Jack felt a wave of joy. He'd not blown it. It wasn't his fault. The ghost woman from the museum was here. Here and now and right in front of them.

'You've done well,' the woman smiled. 'Can you cope with one more puzzle?'

'Yes,' the three children spoke as one. They were still in the game.

'And if you get this one you will have shown to me that you do care about the history of your city, meaning the great historical discovery about Leeds can be made. Shall I tele you the clue?'

'Yesssss.'

The woman smiled: 'I want you to prove that the Anglo-Saxons settled in Leeds.'

'That's easy,' Nishaa said. 'There are things in the museum that...'

The woman shook her head. 'But not by finding an object in a museum or going to place out of town. In another way.'

'But how?' Mo asked.

The woman smiled again, walking out of MacDonalds. 'You'll find a way.'

As Mo and Nishaa watched the woman's back, Jack looked at her son, the boy, as he came past.

'Hi Jack,' the boy said.

Jack gasped. The boy's voice was unmistakable.

'You. I mean, hi,' Jack was thunderstruck. 'Are you... are you okay?'

'I'm fine,' the boy said, then pulled his hoody down to reveal himself. A thin face and a long nose. The boy put up his hand and high-fived Jack.

'I'm fine because you found my dad's coffin,' the boy said. 'And I want to thank you. You did a great thing for me.'

'You're welcome,' Jack said.

The boy glanced at the other ghost and frowned. 'I have to go. Goodbye.'

'Goodbye,' Jack said, as the boy walked out of MacDonalds, quickly fading to nothing.

'Who was he?' Mo asked, staring at the space the boy had vanished into.

'My ghost,' Jack grinned.

Now it's your turn. What do you think the children have to do? Can you think of a way they can prove that the Anglo Saxons settled in Leeds, but without finding an object in a museum or going out of town? Have a go. Then join Mo and Jack and Nishaa on their last quest.

They went straight to the Central Library in town and booked a computer. Ten minutes later they had one. Research. They had to research.

They sat at their computer together. Pulled up extra chairs. All excited. Almost too excited. So close now. Close to solving all four puzzles.

Mo typed 'Prove Leeds is Anglo Saxon.'

The trio studied the results that came up on Google. The fourth entry looked the most promising. They clicked onto the entry and Mo read it out:

'Leeds was probably a major early Anglo Saxon settlement in West Yorkshire.

Bede in 730 mentions 'Campodonum' and 'the region known as Loidis.'

Nishaa spoke slowly. 'So if Loidis was Leeds, which it was, that proves that Leeds was Anglo-Saxon. This Bede person said it. We've done it.'

'Yessss!' Jack said.

'But is that enough?' Mo asked.

'Course it is,' Nishaa replied. 'The lady said we had to find proof that wasn't a place or an object. A book is. And it was in the book. One of the oldest books ever. Leeds was here in Anglo Saxon times.'

'On a website?' Jack asked.

'It's on a website,' Nishaa sounded irritated. 'Exactly. We've done it.'

'But at school...' Jack tried to say.

'We've done it,' Nishaa insisted.

'No,' Jack insisted. 'At school Miss Terry said we can't trust the internet, even though it's useful... we... we...'

'... should always double check in a book,' Mo finished Jack's sentence.

There was a silence. A long silence. Jack and Mo knew that they weren't quite there. They had one more task to perform. But would their friend agree?

Nishaa sighed. 'You're right. I'm sorry. So we need to find the book by this Bede guy? Yeah?'

'Excuse me?'

'Yes?'

Jack had plucked up the courage to ask a librarian for help and the librarian was smiling back at him now. They were in the large reference library two floors up in the central library. Big stone steps. Mosaics. Even stone dogs or lion sculptures on the bannisters.

'Do you have a book by someone called Bede?'

The librarian stood up. 'We do,' he said, looking really happy to be asked. 'It's called *Ecclesiastic History* or something like that. Give me two minutes.'

Jack, Mo and Nishaa waited as the librarian walked behind some shelves. He came back with a book. A book that looked nothing special. Just a heavy-looking hardback with no pictures on the cover.

'Do you need any help finding what you want in the book?' the librarian asked.

'Is there a bit about Leeds, please?'

The librarian nodded. 'There is. I've read this. Let's see.' He leafed through the pages. 'Bede was a monk and he wrote this over 1200 years ago. In the Anglo Saxon period. Lots of what we know about the history of England is in here. The only evidence. Ah yes, here it is... Shall I read it to you all?'

Mo, Jack and Nishaa all said yes. This was it. In the Bede book. About Leeds. During Anglo Saxon times.

The librarian began:

In Campodunum, where there was a royal palace, he built a church which was afterwards burnt down, together with the whole of the buildings, by the heathens who slew King Edwin. In its stead, later kings built a dwelling for themselves in the region known as Loidis.

'Thanks,' Nishaa said.

'You're welcome,' the librarian said. 'Is that all you need?'

'Yes, thanks.'

The man smiled. But he still had something to say. He was excited now. 'The big thing would be if anyone ever found Campodunum. That would be amazing. It was supposed to be an amazing place. It'd be one of the most famous Roman finds ever revealed in the world if it was. Whichever town is was built in would become one of the most famous cities ever. People would come from all over the world. Some people think it was in York or even Sheffield. I'd like to think it was in Leeds, like Bede says. But without proof, no one is sure.'

The children thanked the librarian again and walked down the stone steps to the square outside the front of library.

'That's it then?' Nishaa said.

Mo and Jack nodded.

'We did it,' Jack added.

All three children looked around at the city of Leeds. The buildings, the cars and vans driving on the Headrow, the people walking to and fro.

'Nothing's changed,' Mo said.

'It will,' Jack said. 'It will.'

They went to Nishaa's for their tea. Jack's mum was out again and Mo had permission to stay out. They ate with their dinners on their knees, watching *Look North*. Just in case something was on the news.

Nothing had happened in Leeds to show them that they had succeeded in their challenges. No sign of the woman from the museum. They had even gone looking for her again. And, because of that, Mo and Nishaa were worried that nothing had changed. That they'd failed.

But Jack wasn't worried.

And Jack was right.

Everything was about to change forever. For Leeds. And for him.

It was just he didn't know that. Yet.

'This food is ace,' Jack said to Nishaa, looking at the food he'd been given. 'What is it?'

'Shhhhh.'

'What?'

Jack looked up from his food to see Mo and Nishaa staring at the TV. A banner ran across the bottom of the screen.

Foundations of Campodonum found under Leeds building site...

‘The place the librarian told us about,’ Jack said, staring. ‘The one mentioned in that Bede book.’

They watched a huge building site, two giant cranes looming overhead, then a group of workmen standing round a huge hole in the ground.

The reporter continued: ‘The remains of the royal palace of Campodonum were found when workmen were digging the foundations of the new shopping centre at the bottom of the Headrow. Archaeologists are already convinced that this is the long lost royal palace of Campodonum, a hugely important Roman site. This is the biggest Roman discovery in the UK for centuries...’

The three friends exploded with joy, jumping up and down on the chairs, laughing, cheering, screaming.

‘That’s what the lady said,’ Mo gasped, after calming down.

‘That if we solved all the puzzles...’ Nishaa added.

‘...something amazing would be found,’ Jack finished the sentence.

They all stared hard at the images on the TV. The workmen. The hole. The signs of Roman walls and something gold being lifted out of the ground.

Then the TV cameras showed a group of three people watching. A man and a lady standing in hardhats on the left of the crowd. With a boy, also in a hardhat.

Mo, Jack and Nishaa recognised the lady and boy immediately. It was the pair they had met in MacDonalds. No doubt about it.

It meant they had succeeded in their mission. That they had helped uncover a great secret about Leeds by being interested in their city’s past.

As Mo and Nishaa chattered and laughed, Jack looked more closely at the man next to their two ghosts.

The man took off his hat and tipped it forward, as if greeting Jack.

Jack swallowed.

He wanted to speak, tell the others to look, but he couldn’t.

Because he recognised the look on the face on the face of the man with the hardhat.

Recognised his eyes, his mouth, his hair, everything.

Jack smiled at the man on the TV screen.

And the man smiled back.

That's the end of Loidis Ledes Leeds ! Thank you for reading this five-part story. We hope you have enjoyed the experience!

There are certificates for the children in your class – or home –to download from <http://tompalmer.co.uk/leeds-sls/> or overleaf on page 33 to mark their following it over the weeks.

If you want to try my other Free Reads – first chapters and classroom reads - there's lots to choose from here <http://tompalmer.co.uk/free-reads/>.

Now it's your turn to write a story, any story, but it must be set in Leeds. The winner of the Leeds Story Writing Competition - will win a visit to their school by me and have their story on this website here www.tompalmer.co.uk/leeds-SLS . Closing date is April 20th. More information is follows on page 34 or here <http://tompalmer.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Leeds-Writing-Competition-poster.docx>

We'd love to hear what you and your class thought of the story and how you used it in class. Please email admin@tompalmer.co.uk with your feedback.

If you'd like to know more about Leeds Schools Library Service please visit <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Schools-library-service.aspx> or email Pauline.Thresh@leeds.gov.uk .

Thanks very much again

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

March 2016



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with thanks
for following
my 5 part
ghost story

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LEDES
LEEDS
BY TOM
PALMER**

Signed Tom Palmer

Date 30 March 2016

The adventures of three pupils across Leeds ... across time
Iron Age Romans Anglo Saxons Vikings Now



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Loides! Ledes! Leeds!

Story Writing competition

You have followed the *adventures of three Leeds pupils across Leeds ... across time*

Now it's your turn to write a story, any story, but it must be set in Leeds.

The winner will win a visit to their school by the author Tom Palmer and have their story on his website www.tompalmer.co.uk/leeds-SLS

Competition rules

- Open to Leeds pupils only
- One entry per school - schools are invited to shortlist and send in their one best entry
- The story must be set in Leeds
- The story must be the child's own
- There is no minimum limit on words but the story must be no longer than 500 words
- Each entry must have the name of the child, their school and year group clearly written on their story
- Entries must be neatly written and legible, preferably typed
- The decision of the judges (Tom, Pauline and Vicky) is final
- Deadline for entries is **Wednesday 20th April 2016**

Entries must be sent either by post to

Pauline Thresh, SLS Manager
School Library Service
Foxcroft Close
Leeds
LS6 3NT

Or preferably emailed to Pauline.thresh@leeds.gov.uk

For top tips and help to get writing, why not visit the BBC's 500 Words competition website?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00rtvk1>