

ROY OF THE ROVERS™

by TOM PALMER



Using comics
to develop
writing skills

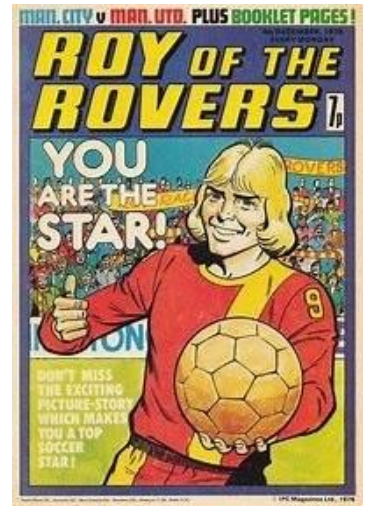
Notes for Teachers

Comic books have always been an appealing form of storytelling, as have novels. Each form reveals characters and plots in very different ways.

The **Roy of the Rovers** comic series has been rebooted for the 21st century. The comic books by Rob Williams and Lisa Henke are interspersed with fictional novels by Tom Palmer. Like a relay race, the story is carried by the two authors between the fiction and comic book formats.

Tom Palmer bases the beginnings and endings of his novels on the comic books already written and illustrated by Rob Williams and Lisa Henke.

To help develop literacy skills, we've developed a pupil worksheet using the comic book ending of **Transferred** and the start of Tom's novel **From the Ashes**.



You do not have to have read the previous books to understand this, but we hope this might inspire some pupils to go on and read them from their local or school library.

The story so far ...

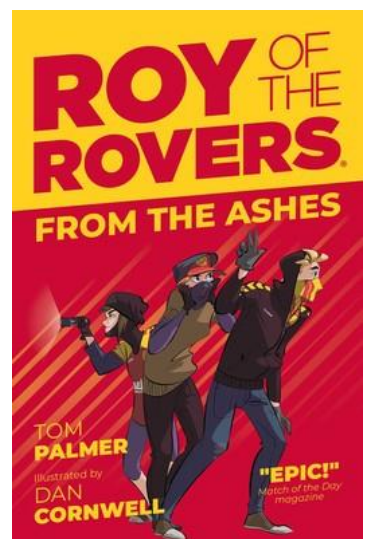
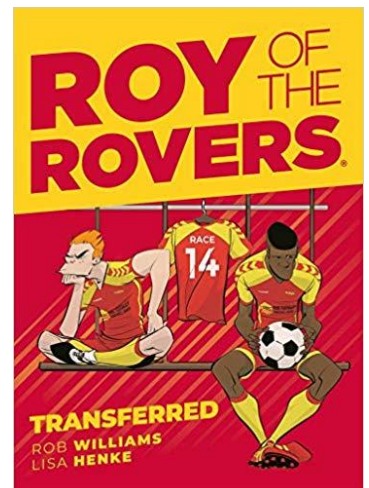
Season 1

- 1 **Scouted** (fiction)
- 2 Kick Off (comic)
- 3 **Teamwork** (fiction)
- 4 Foul Play (comic)
- 5 **Playoffs** (fiction)
- 6 Going Up (comic)

Season 2

- 1 Transferred (comic)
- 2 **On Tour** (fiction)
- 2 **From The Ashes** (fiction)
- 3 **Rocky** (fiction)
- 4 Pressure (comic)

"Just finished [@royoftherovers](#) book 1 by [@tompalmerauthor](#) A wonderful book about pursuing your dreams whatever your circumstances. I love how Tom covers football alongside real life issues that some of our children face today. [#welldone](#)" [@emmasuffield](#) School Librarian of the Year 2018



LATER...



LATER STILL...



THIS CANNOT BE A GOOD IDEA.

NO. IT PROBABLY ISN'T.

THIS IS YOUR PLAN BREAKING AND ENTERING?

I WOULD RATHER GO TO GERMANY ON LOAN THAN GO TO PRISON. ROY RACE.



THE REPORTS SAY THAT THE FINAL CONTRACTS FOR OUR TRANSFERS HAVE GONE MISSING.

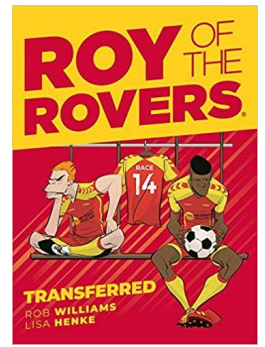
THEY HAVE TO BE IN CLEAVERS'S OFFICE. ALONG WITH, I'LL BET, PROOF OF ALL SORTS OF DOGGY STUFF.

IF WE CAN GET IN THERE WE CAN I PINNO. MAYBE PROVE TO THE LEAGUE THAT ROVERS HAVE DONE NOTHING WRONG. MAYBE WE CAN PLAY AGAIN!

IDIOTS.



Pupil Worksheet



Look at the comic strip illustration from *Roy of the Rovers : Transferred*.

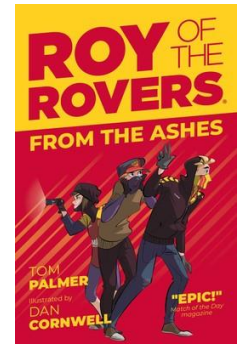
Now fill as many details (in rough note form) as you can in the table below :

<p>What time of day is it?</p>	
<p>How can you tell?</p>	
<p>What clues are there in the pictures to indicate time is passing?</p>	
<p>Where is this?</p>	
<p>What else can you see?</p>	
<p>How many different characters do you think there are?</p>	
<p>Give each character a name to help you identify and characterise them?</p>	
<p>Describe each character's appearance and what they are doing.</p>	
<p>Can you guess anything about their personality from how they are depicted in the drawings?</p>	
<p>What do you think has happened before this scene?</p>	

What do you predict will happen next?	
What sort of mood do these pictures create?	
How has the illustrator created this mood?	
What sort of feelings are the characters experiencing?	
How does the illustrator make you feel looking at the pictures?	

“From the Ashes” by Tom Palmer

Here is the chapter Tom developed from the end of *Transferred* for the first chapter of *From the Ashes*.



One

A hard, bright moon illuminated the scene as two figures moved stealthily in the shadow a long wooden fence not far from Melchester Rovers’ football stadium. Their only witness was a young vivid red vixen, crouching on a nearby canal bank, unused to humans disturbing her midnight world.

Both looked like young men, athletic. But their heads and faces were obscured. One wore a grey beanie hat over his head: the other a black covering his face. But you could tell, - from the expressions on their faces – that they were nervous. Maybe even having second thoughts about what they were about to do.

Look closer at those faces and you might recognise the two young men. The square jaw of one. His determined expression. The flop of blonde hair and piercing blue eyes of the other.

Our two delinquents are no delinquents.

They are professional footballers. Paco Juan Goytisolo Diaz and Roy Daniel Race.

‘This cannot be a good idea,’ Paco whispered urgently. No,’ Roy replied in a low almost inaudible voice. ‘It probably isn’t.’

Something white and ghostly caught Roy’s eye, swooping silently through the row of trees alongside the canal.

Roy saw the owl and smiled faintly. It reminded him of when his dad would take him and his sister on late night nature walks. When he was younger. But Roy was not a child any more. Times had changed. He was here for a different reason.

‘This is your plan?’ Paco went on. ‘Breaking and entering. I would rather go to Germany on loan than go to prison, Roy Race.’

For the thousandth time, Roy questioned what they were about to do. Breaking. And entering. Into Mel Park. It was illegal. It was immoral. It was irresponsible. But that didn’t mean it was wrong. It didn’t mean that – if this worked – then his and Paco’s world, Melchester Rovers’ world and even the whole world would not be a better place.

Roy coughed quietly before he said to Paco what he had said to himself over and over.

‘The reports say that the final contracts for our transfers have gone missing. They have to be in Cleaver’s office. Along with, I’ll bet, proof of all sorts of dodgy stuff. If we can get in there we can, I dunno, maybe prove to the league that rovers have done nothing wrong? Maybe we can play again!’

Then a noise.

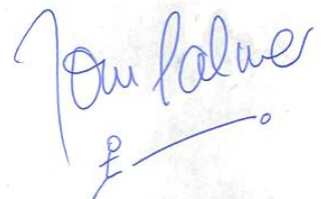
The crunch of a stone under a boot. The flick of gravel against the wooden fence. An intake of breath.

‘Idiots!’ a voice shattered the silence.

What do you think?

How is this similar to your writing and how does it differ?

If you want to find out what Tom thought happens next, read more of **From the Ashes!**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Palmer". Below the signature is a stylized flourish that resembles a pound sign (£) with a horizontal line extending to the right.