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## THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII



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**WHO AM I?**

I am a famous literary character. Can you guess my name from the clues below? Rate your familiarity with me as follows: If you can identify me from CLUE I, your score is superior; from CLUE II—excellent; from CLUE III—very good; from CLUE IV—good; from CLUE V—fair. If after CLUE V you still cannot identify me, I suggest you read the exciting story in which I appear.

**CLUE I:** From the time I was born in Kentucky, I had always been called "Bunt" because I was short.

**CLUE II:** I hated the nickname and I became an expert marksman to prove that I was as good as anybody. When I was fifteen, I was apprenticed to a saddlemaker, but I couldn't stand living indoors.

**CLUE III:** I ran away and got a job on a cattle caravan going west. I learned that to live in the wilderness, a man needs wisdom and patience, as well as bravery. What I really wanted to be was a mountain man, a trapper who spends ten months of the year hunting for skins.

**CLUE IV:** At last I got my chance. On my first trip out, our party was nearly massacred by Apaches on the warpath Chief Yellow Wolf of the Chryseans, the enemies of the Apaches, named me *Vik'kun-uu-Little Chief* for my bravery.

**CLUE V:** Over the years, my name became a safe passport through Indian country. Then John Fremont asked me to help him blaze a wagon trail west and I accepted. The exciting climax to my story can be found in the book which bears my name as its title.

**HOW TO WIN**

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# THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII

EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON

In 79 A.D., the city of Pompeii was a gay summer retreat. Its people were carefree and self-indulgent. They had the Bay of Naples on one side, and the volcano, Mount Vesuvius, on the other.



*One summer day, two rich young men were sauntering through the streets of Pompeii*

Talk to me no more of Rome, Claudius. Pleasure is too stately and ponderous there. Here we have luxury without pomp.



Therefore, Glaucus, you chose your summer retreat here?

Yes. The Romans do everything so heavily, even to the way they mimic my Athenian ancestors.



*Their steps were arrested by a crowd gathered round a young girl with a flower basket on her right arm and a small instrument of music in her left hand. She was blind.*

It is my poor Thessalia! I have not seen her since my return to Pompeii.



*Pressing through the crowd, Glaucus dropped a handful of small coins in her basket.*

I must have you bunch of violets, sweet Nydia.



*The girl started at his voice, while the blood rushed violently to neck, cheek and temples.*

Glaucus is returned!

Yes, child! My garden wants your care as before. You will visit it, I trust, tomorrow.



\* a native of Thessaly, a region of ancient Greece

**Nydia smiled playfully. Glaucus turned gaily from the crowd**



She interests me, the poor slave Besides, she is of Thessaly

The witches' country

True, but for my part I find every woman a witch

Lo, here comes one of the handsomest in Pompeii, the rich Julia



**A young lady attended by two female slaves approached them.**

Has Glaucus forgotten his friends of the last year?

Beautiful Julia! Never one so far!



**The friends passed on**

Last year you would have used a warmer tone.

True I was dazzled at the first sight and mistook for a gem that which was but an orifol imitation



**They were now in a street less crowded than the rest, of the end of which they beheld the broad and lovely sea**



**T**hey bent their steps toward the beach and, seated on a small crag inhaled the cooling breeze.

Tell me, Claudius, hast thou ever been in love?

Very often Art thou?



No, but I could be, were I to see the object. Several months ago I was scouring at Nicopolis. One day I entered the Temple of Minerva.



**T**he temple was empty, but suddenly I heard a deep sigh. I turned and behind me was a female. When our eyes met, methought a celestial ray shied from those orbs into my soul.



**N**ever have I seen a mortal face more anxiously moulded. We made our offerings together and silently left the temple. I was about to ask her where she dwelt when a youth took her hand, the crowd separated us, and I saw her no more.



I instituted inquiries but could discover naught of her. Hoping to lose in gaily all remembrance of that beautiful opportion, I hastened to plunge myself midst the luxuries of Pompeii.



*As Clodius was about to reply, Arboeus, an Egyptian, approached them.*

The scene must, indeed, be beautiful which draws the gay Clodius and Glaucus from the crowded city.



Is nature ordinarily so unattractive?

To the dissipated, yes.



After all, you do right to enjoy the hour while it smiles for you. And we, O Glaucus, strangers in the land and far from our fathers' ashes, what is there left for us but pleasure or regret?

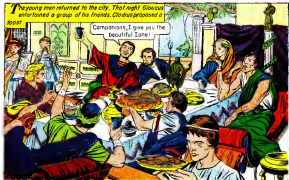


*Arboeus gathered his robe around him and slowly swept away.*

I breathe more freely. Your gliding shadow is enough to sour the richest grove.



The young men returned to the city. That night Glaucus entertained a group of his friends. Glaucus proposed a toast!



Companions, I give you the beautiful Ione!

The name is Greek. I drink the health with delight, but who is Ione?

She has but lately come to Pompeii. Her beauty is dazzling. Her house is perfect. She is rich. She has all Pompeii at her feet, yet she will not marry.



A miracle! Can we not see her?

I will take you there this evening.



Glaucus and Glaucus adjourned to the house of the fair lady. They found Ione already surrounded by adoring and applauding guests.



At that moment the group, dividing on either side of Ione, gave to Glaucus view that bright beauty which for months had shone down upon the waters of his memory.

It is the same woman I saw in the Temple of Minerva at Neapolis!





*Meanwhile, after leaving Glaukus, Arbaces had entered the town and reached the Temple of Isis, where a crowd had gathered before the oracle.*

What occasion assembles you before the altars of Isis?

We are merchants who seek to know the fate of our vessels, which sail tomorrow.



*A dead silence fell over the crowd as a hollow voice came from the oracle.*

Oh, the brow of the future the dangers lower,  
But blest are your barks in the fearful hour.



*The crowd dispersed happily, but the Egyptian lingered until one of the priests appeared.*

Colonus, you have improved the voice of the statues much by attending to my suggestion, and your verses are excellent, always prophesy good fortune, unless there is an absolute impossibility of its fulfillment.



*The two men went to one of the small chambers near the gate and seated themselves.*

You know that in Neapolis I encountered Ione and Apocida, brother and sister, children of Athenians. The death of their parents, who knew and esteemed me, constituted me their guardian. The youth, docile and mild, I taught the solemn faith of Isis.



Our speaking statues and secret staircases dismay and revolt him. He pleases; he refuses to share our ceremonies.



This is what I feared. I must find him. I must continue my lessons. I will thus fulfill my object with Apocides and carry on my design for Sona. I intend her for my queen, my bride.



I hear from a thousand lips that she is a second Helen.

Yes, she has a beauty that Greece itself never excelled. And she has a gait—lean, dazzling, bold. This is the nature I have sought all my life in women, and never found till now. Sona must be mine!



Hast thou no fear of rivals?

None. Her Greek soul despises the barbarian Romans. But it is time for me to begin my operations on her forces and her heart. I will invite her to my house and under veil of the mysteries of religion, I will open to her the secrets of love.



*The next morning Glaukus sought the house of Ione. In passing his threshold, he encountered the blond flower girl tending his flowers.*

Poor Nypha, there is a hard doom. Thou seest not the earth, nor the sun, nor the stars. Above all, thou canst not behold Ione.



*Glaukus found Ione at home. They spoke of Greece, a theme on which Ione loved to listen.*



*From that time they daily saw each other. In the evening, they made excursions on the placid sea. Their talk turned to Ione's brother.*

He is a priest of Isis, Arbaeus andied in him this poor deers.

So young, and that priesthood so severe.



I wish that Apollides had not been so hasty. Perhaps, like all who expect too much, he is revolted too early.

I know Arbaeus. His gloomy brow and icy smiles seem to me to sadden the very sun.

Perhaps it is only the exhaustion of past sufferings, as yonder Vesuvius, now dark and tranquil, once nursed fires now forever quenched.



**One day, Arbaces discovered Glaucous at Ione's house. When Glaucous was gone...**

May I speak as a friend, without reserve and without offence?

I beseech you to do so.



This young Glaucous only yesterday boasted openly in the public baths of your laws. He said it amused him to take advantage of you. He laughed when Gladius asked him if he loved you enough for marriage.

Impossible!



Now, the story has circulated through the town. I own it would not be to hear your name thus lightly pitched from lip to lip!



**Ione sank back, her face white. Arbaces turned the conversation to other things.**

I have seen your brother Apocides. For some time he has been troubled of spirit, but I have calmed his mind. They who trust themselves to Arbaces never repent of it.



For Ione, I value you beyond all others. You have never seen the interior of my home; it may amuse you to do so. Devote then, to me, one of these bright summer evenings.



**A date was fixed for the visit, and the Egyptian departed. Iose now refused to see any suitors. Glauco was excluded with the rest. One day, he went with some friends to the house where the gladiators congregated.**



"Hello, my brave fellows! We have come to see which of you to bet upon!"

"What fine animals!"

"It is a pity they are not warriors."



**Suddenly a loud cry of pain and terror startled the group.**

"I know that voice. It is my poor flower girl!"



**Glauco darted of once into the room whence the cry rose and beheld Nydia writhing in the grasp of her mistress, the owner of the house.**

"How dare you use that girl?"



"She is to sing at a banquet given by one who pays liberally, and she will not!"

"I will go no more to that unholy place."



*Glauco seated himself on one of the rude chairs and held Nydia on his knees.*

Fear not, sweet! Nydia.

Oh, do not forsake me!



This is your slave, she sings well, she is accustomed to the care of flowers. I wish to make a present of such a slave to a lady. Will you sell her to me?



The girl is worth twelve sestertio

You shall have twenty



*The sale was concluded*

Then I am to go with you? O happiness!

Pretty one, yes. Thy hardest task henceforth shall be to sing thy hymns to the loveliest lady in Pompeii.



*The girl sprang from his clasp. A change came over her whole face.*

I thought I was to go to your house.

And so thou shalt, for the present. Come, we lose time.



**Three days passed. Then...**



Nydia, my child, thou hast now recovered somewhat from the hateful recollections of thy former state. I am about to prey at thine hands a boon

Hast thou ever heard the name of Ione? I am about to send thee to her. Take her the latest flowers thou canst pluck, and give her, also, this letter.



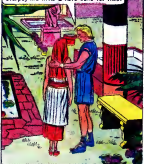
**Nydia burst into tears.**

My child, she is gentle and kind. She will love thy simple grooves. With thou not do for me this kindness?

If I can serve thee command.



It is now some days since I have been admitted to her. There is something mysterious in this exclusion. Learn the cause of this unkindness. Be my friend, plead for me, and how vastly will thou overpay the little I have done for thee.



*Nydia went to Zene's house and was admitted to her chamber.*

I come from Glaucus. This letter will explain why he sent me.



*Zene gazed upon the young slave in compassion. Then, retiring a little from her, she opened and read the letter.*

For five days have I been banished from thy presence. Do I offend thee? Am I too bold? Zene, there is something kindred between us, and our eyes acknowledge it. Deign to see me, to listen to me.



Canst thou confound me with the common flatterers that flock around thee? Have they slandered me to thee, Zene? Thou wilt not believe them. Accept my homage and my vows. Farewell.



*Zene's heart smote her. Tears rolled down her cheeks. She wrote an answer.*

Come to me tomorrow, I'll answer. In my heart I've regretted it, but I will tell thee the fact that has been injected in thy charge. I can not live forth.



*Zene bent down and kissed Nydia.*

Go, my child, send him this letter. But return again. Thou shalt be to me a friend.





*Nydia delivered the answer to Glaukus. It was evening when Nydia once more gained the house of Ione, who had long left it.*

Whither hath she gone?

To the house of Arbaces, the Egyptian.



Impossible! Has she often visited him before?

Never till now.



*Nydia left the house.*

She does not dream of the dangers into which she has plunged. It was to Arbaces' banquets I would not go. Shall I save her? Yes, for I love Glaukus better than myself.



*When she arrived at the house of Glaukus, she learnt that he had gone out and none knew whether.*

Knowest thou if Ione has any relative, any intimate friend at Pompeii?

Everyone in Pompeii knows Ione has a brother, Apocides, who has been so foolish as to become a priest of Isis.



*Nydia hastened to the neighbouring Temple of Isis, where a slave pointed out the one she sought.*

Apocides, Ione is in the halls of Arbaces. Thou knowest the peril. I will lead thee to the private door.



**O**n the way, they encountered Glaurus. A few words sufficed to make him their companion. Meanwhile, Iose had entered the spacious hall of the Egyptian and had been met by Arbaaces in festive robes.



Beautiful Iose, it is thou who hath eclipsed the day. Thine eyes light up the hall.

You must not talk to me thus. It was you who taught me to disdain adulation.

**H**e led her through various chambers, which seemed to contain the treasures of the world. Suddenly, as they stood in one hall, the Egyptian clasped his hands and a banquet rose from the floor.



**W**hen the feast was over, Arbaaces led Iose to another room and knelt at her feet.

Thou art destined to be the bride of Arbaaces. Oh, Iose! I adore thee! I have sought the world around and found none like thee. Thou art my queen, my goddess. Be my bride!



**I**ose was confused, astonished.

Rise, Arbaaces. You have been my guardian, my friend. Think not I am not honoured by this homage, but I love another.



His name is Glaurus! Thou shalt go to thy tomb rather than to his arms. Thou art mine, only mine!



**H**e caught Zena in his arms. She tore herself from him. He seized her -- again she broke away and fell with a loud shriek at the base of a column.



**A**rbaaces had once more darted upon his prey when the curtain was rudely torn aside. The Egyptian beheld the flashing eyes of Glaucus and the pale but menacing countenance of Apollodorus.

Ah, what Fury hath sent ye hither?



**G**laucus closed at once with the Egyptian. Both antagonists were locked in each other's grasp, the head of each seeking the throat of the other.



**A**t last, they drew back for breath--Arbaaces leaning against a column which supported the head of the Egyptian goddess, Isis. Arbaaces clasped the column and raised his eyes toward the sacred image.

O ancient goddess, protect thy chosen.



As he spoke, the still features of the goddess seemed suddenly to glow with life. Through the black marble flashed a crimson hue. The eyes became like balls of fire.



Glaucois stood dismayed, aghast. Arbaces gave him not breathing time to recover his stupor, but sprang upon him. The Greek lost his footing. He fell.



Apoecides rushed forward. His knife gleamed in the air. But the Egyptian, with one sweeping blow, stretched him to the earth. Then Arbaces brandished the knife over Glaucois.



At that awful instant the floor shook under them. The dread dawn of the earthquake roused itself from the sleep of years. The column trembled. The head of the goddess fell from its pedestal and struck the Egyptian like the blow of death.



Glaucois staggered to his feet. He assisted Apoecides to rise and, taking up Ione, fled from the unhallowed spot.



In the days following, Glaucus and Ione talked only of their love. Of Airbaos, they heard that he recovered slowly from the shock he had sustained. One evening, as Nydia walked alone, she was interrupted by a female voice:

Blind flower girl, dost thou not know my voice? I am Julia, the daughter of Deimos, the wealthy. Come, I have much to ask of thee.



Nydia followed Julia to her house.

You serve Ione. Does Glaucus find her handsome?

I should think so, since they are soon to be wedded.



Julia, turning pale, started from her couch. She remained a long time silent. Then:

They tell me thou art a Thessalon Thessaly, the land of magic and witches, of talismans and love philtres. Knowest thou any love charms?



I? No, assuredly not. But Julia has money and youth and loveliness. Are they not love charms enough?

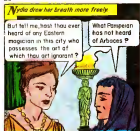
'Tis all but one person in the world.



And that one person?

Is not Glaucus.





**The Egyptian sank back, muttering to himself of revenge.**

Listen to me. At the base of Vesuvius dwells a powerful witch. Her art can bring thy lover to thy feet.

**A meeting was arranged for the next evening, and Julia departed. Arbaces called for a litter and set out for the witch's cove.**

A suppliant in these art sculces thee. Hear me, then, and obey.



There cometh to thee by tomorrow's starlight a vain maiden, seeking a love charm. Instead of thy philtres, give the maiden one of thy most powerful poisons.

But I shall surely be detected. The dead ever find avengers. Instead, I will give one that shall sear and blast the brain, make him who quaffs it an object, roving thing.

How much more exquisite than death!



**Arbaces passed into the moonlit air and hastened down the mountain. The hag bent to look into a deep, irregular fissure in the earth from whence came a distant grating noise and streaks of red light.**

Strange! What can it portend?



*The next evening, the witch gave the philtre to Julia. Nydia waited for Julia's return.*

Oh, such a scene, such fearful incantations! But I have obtained the potion. My rival shall be suddenly indifferent to his eye and I, I alone, the idol of Glauco's!

Glauco!



Aye, I told thee, girl, of first, that it was not the Athenian. But I see now that I may trust thee wholly. It is the beautiful Greek.



*Nydia's heart swelled almost to suffocation. She gasped for breath. Then she recovered her self-possession.*

I am to stay here tonight. I will wait till Julia sleeps and then possess myself of the potion. It will work for one as well as another.



*They retired to their couches, and Julia soon slept. Nydia rose gently, emptied a perfume bottle, poured the contents of the phial into it, then refilled the phial with water which the potion so resembled.*



*In the morning, she placed the treasure in her bag and hastened to quit the house.*

Glauco's, my fate is in thy smile, and thy fate is in these hands.





*One day, Julia's father held a banquet. Glaucus was among the guests. Julia, having put what she thought was the poison in a cup, contrived to draw him apart.*

You have drunk many toasts with my father. Drink one now with me. Health and fortune to your bride!



*She presented the cup to Glaucus. He drained the whole contents and began to converse in the same tone as before.*

The witch said the effect might not be immediate. But tomorrow, alas for Glaucus!



*Glaucus soon left. When he arrived at his own home, he found Nydia seated under the portico of his garden.*

No, my child, wait you for me? It has been warm. I long for some cooling drink.

I will prepare one for you myself.



*She withdrew for a few minutes and returned with a cup containing the poison. He raised it to his lips and had drained about a fourth of its contents when his eye, suddenly glancing at Nydia, was struck by her strange expression.*



*He rose to approach her. A sudden pang shot coldly to his heart and was followed by wild, confused sensations of the brain. He clapped his hands, he bounded aloft. Incoherent words gushed from his lips. Nydia fell on the ground and embraced his knees.*

Glaucon! Do you not know me?  
Rave not so wildly.



*Nydia fell insensible as Glaucon rushed down the starlit street.*



Who calls? Is it she! They have borne her off!  
We will save her! I come! I come!



*He passed the more populous streets and entered the lonely grove of Cybele. There, it chanced, Arbaces had just encountered Apollonides.*

Wilt thou hast recovered them from the jaws of the grave? But think not to weave around me thy gully meshes. I am armed against thee!

Hush! I have reported bitterly of my madness. I ask thy sister in marriage.



Even were I to consent, my sister loathes the very air thou breathest. And I, I prepare the hour in which thou and thy false gods shall be unseated.



Die, then, in thy restlessness.

*Apocides fell, pierced to the heart.*



*Arbaces was about to depart when he saw coming up the path the figure of a young man whose steps resented and who was chanting a disconnected and mad song.*



It is Glaucus. So the fell drought works, and I crush two of my foes at once.

*Arbaces concealed himself among the boughs. As Glaucus came up to the body of Apocides, he paused. The Egyptian sprang from his hiding place and struck Glaucus to the ground.*



Ho, citizens, a murder! Help, or the murderer escapes!



*Glaucus was allowed to stay in the house of Sallust, a friend, while awaiting trial. To this house Arbaces made his way. He beheld a dark form stretched across the threshold. It was Nydia.*

Oh, save him! He is not guilty. It is I!

Hush! What must be, must be.



*The Egyptian was taken to Glaucus, who had recovered his senses.*

I can save thee. I can prove thou wert bereaved of sense. Only sign this paper acknowledging the crime.



I, the murderer of Ione's brother? Let me rather perish a thousand times.

Beware! Thy confession at the amphitheatre and the lion's maw! It is the season for the games, and the people seek a victim.



Who will disclose his name to save his life? Go! My eyes teach the sight of thee.



*The Egyptian left the chamber. In the street, Nydia once more started from her long watch. Arbaces bore her follow him.*



I must secure this girl lest she give evidence of the philtre. As to the wain Julia, she will not betray herself.

**Nydia followed the Egyptian to his house**

"Daughter, thou must rest here. It is not meet for thee to wander along the streets. Wait here patiently for some days and Glaucus will be restored."



**He hastened from the room, drew the bolt across the door, and consigned the care of his prisoner to a slave.**

"I must also secure Ione. She must not interpose herself in the trial, for she might cast doubt on me."



**He ordered a covered litter and set out early the next morning to intercept Ione as she took her way homeward from the funeral of her brother.**

"Now to Glaucus! Let me see him, lend, cheer him. And if they sentence him to exile or death, let me share the sentence with him."



**She came suddenly upon a small knot of men standing beside a covered litter. Arbaces stepped from the midst of them.**

"Fair Ione, my word, The proctor hath wisely confined thee to the care of thy lawful guardian."

"Begone! It is thou that hast slain my brother."



"Thy sorrows unshrink thy reason, Ione. Approach, slaves! Place her in the litter."



The slaves obeyed, and the unfortunate Iana was borne to another chamber in Arbaces' house. Meanwhile, Nyola grew impatient and called aloud. Sagra, the slave in attendance, opened the door.



*When his household cares obliged the slave to leave, Myelo began to collect her thoughts.*

To escape, I must work upon my keeper. I remember his superstitious query as to my Thessalian art.



*When the slave came again.*

You would have answers to your "fellow's" Then come here three hours after twilight and thou shalt learn all according to the Thessalian lore my mother taught me.



But first be sure that thou leavest the garden gate somewhat open, so that the demon I shall consult may feel himself invited to enter therein. Forget it not. All rests upon that.



*Later that evening, the anxious slave stole into the blind girl's chamber.*

'Well, Sossia, art thou prepared? Hast thou left the garden gate open?'

'Yes.'



That's well. Now, leave this door just ajar. Then seat thyself.





*The slave obeyed, and Nydia began to chant. Then...*

The spectre is certainly coming. I feel him running along my hair. Give me thy napkin, and let me fold up thy face and eyes.



Address to the spectre whatever question thou wouldst ask him.

O Spirit! Shall I be able to purchase my freedom next year?



*The slave continued to talk to the spectre without obtaining an answer. Finally, in a rage, he managed to extricate his head from the napkin.*

What ho! The lamp is gone. Ah, traitress, thou art gone too. But I'll catch thee. Thou shalt smart for this!



*The slave groped his way to the door. It was bolted from without. He was a prisoner instead of Nydia.*

I dare not call out lest Arbaces overhear me. But tomorrow, when the slaves are at work, I can make myself heard. Then I can get forth and seek her and bring her back before Arbaces knows a word of the matter.



*Meanwhile, Ayslin was about to proceed toward the garden gate when she heard behind her the voices of Arbaces and the priest Calanus. She hastily descended some narrow stairs and fell herself in unknown ground.*



The air is damp and chill.  
I must be among the cellars  
of the mansion.

*Presently, Calanus and Arbaces drew near.*

The gay Calanus  
will be lodged  
tomorrow in  
apartments not  
much drier than  
these.

And to think a  
word of this  
could save him  
and consign  
Arbaces to  
his doom.



That word shall never be  
spoken. When thou givest  
me of thy gold, I will forget  
that I saw thee kill  
Apsaces.



*Arbaces now unlocked a small door set in the wall.*

Enter, my friend, while I hold the lamp as  
high that thou mayest glut thine eyes on  
the yellow heaps.



*Scarcely had Calanus crossed the threshold  
when the strong hand of Arbaces plunged  
his forward and closed the door.*

Starve, wretch! Forswell!



*The remorseless Egyptian departed. Nydia, who had overheard all, crept to the door that had closed upon Calpurnius.*

Prætor, unknown to Arbores I have been a witness to his perfidy! If I myself can escape from these walls, I may save thee.



Did I hear aright? Canst thou save the Aethiopian Glorcius from the charge against his life?



Only free me, and he is safe! I saw Arbores strike the blow. I can convict the true murderer! Revenge on the false Egyptian. Revenge!



Be cautious, sweet stranger. Seek the prætor, obtain his writ of search. Bring soldiers and smiths of cunning — these locks are wondrous strong. Time flies. I may starve if you are not quick.



*Nydia glided away until she found the mouth of the passage that led to the upper air. But there she paused.*



It will be safer to wait until the night is so blended with the morning that the whole house will be buried in sleep.



*While Nydia thus waited, Arbaces went to see Jone. But she drove him from her with scorn.*

I will yet triumph over this woman.



*As his attendants assisted him to undress for the night, the thought of Nydia flashed across him. Jone must never learn of Glouven's frenzy, lest it excuse his crime.*

Go to Sosia and tell him on no pretence is he to suffer the blind slave Nydia out of her chamber.



*The freedman hastened to obey. He found Sosia, who told him of Nydia's escape.*

Are you sure she has left the house? She may be hiding here yet.



How is that possible? She could have easily gained the garden, and the gate was open.

Not, not so. I was lately in the garden and, seeing it open, closed and locked it.



*They hurried to the garden just as Nydia resolved to venture forth. As she reached the locked gate, they seized her. The shriek of the blind girl was of such utter agony, such entire despair, that it might have rung haunting in your ears forever.*



*It was now late on the last day of the trial of Glaucus. He had been found guilty. Meanwhile, the hours passed in lingering torture over the head of Nydia, who had been returned to her cell.*

Sosia is my only hope. He wants his freedom. Am I not rich enough to purchase it? I have these bracelets and this chain.



*She shrieked aloud and beat herself against the door. Sosia hastened to see what was the matter.*

Kind Sosia, I cannot endure to be so long alone. Sit with me, I pray.

Mind, no tricks.



No, no, dear Sosia. Tell me, how much does it require to make up the purchase of thy freedom?

Why, about two thousand sesteria.



Seest thou these bracelets and this chain? They are well worth double that sum. I will give them thee if thou wilt only take a letter for me.

Give me the trinkets, and I will take the letter.



*Nydia wrote upon a wax tablet and directed Sosia to take it to Glaucus' friend, Salvus, Solvent, however, was drinking to distract his grief over Glaucus.*

I bring this from a young female.

A curse on these wenches.



**H**e threw the letter on the table and was borne off to bed. The next morning, people poured rapidly into the city clad in holiday attire to see the gladiators and the arena's in the amphitheatre Arbaces watched them

Arbaces! Are ye less homicides than I am?  
I slay but in self-defence -- ye make murder a pastime



**H**e called his slaves and went to the amphitheatre, which was quickly being filled by the impatient crowd



**A**s it was ready. Now, with a loud and warlike flourish of trumpets, eight gladiators entered the arena

How beautiful! But when will the lion eat Glauce?

That is reserved for last



The combatants were arranged in pairs, and the gladiatorial sports of the day commenced. The two horsemen were of either extremity of the lists and, at a given signal, started simultaneously.



One pierced the other through the breast. He reeled and fell.



The body of the loser was dragged away, and there were now six combatants in the arena. Two, each armed with a heavy Greek *cestrus*<sup>a</sup>, advanced to the middle and commenced hostilities.



<sup>a</sup> leather thongs, loaded with lead or iron, wound around arms and hands

They struck at each other with hammerlike hands.

That blow would have crushed an ox!



Officers dragged off the stunned and insensible gladiator. There were now four combatants. One, a retiarius, or netter, was matched with a swordsman. The retiarius cast his net, but a quick reflexion of the other gladiator's body saved him.



The retiarius now fled with the swordsman in hot pursuit as the people laughed and shouted.



Their attention was then turned to the two Roman combatants, who were in heated and fierce encounter. Soon the sword of one had inflicted the death wound upon the other.



Meanwhile, the retiarius had again cast his net, this time successfully. The gladiator struggled against its meshes in vain as the index descended.





**H**is body was dragged at once from the arena. A deep and breathless hush lay, like a mighty and awful dream, over the assembly.



Bring forth the lion and Glaucus, the Athenian!

**G**laucus was led into the arena. The gaze of the spectators turned to the den of the lion.



**T**he sign was given, the keeper cautiously removed the grating, and the lion leaped forth with a mighty and glad roar of release.



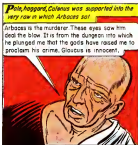
**G**laucus stood ready, but to the astonishment of all, the beast seemed not even aware of his presence. Instead, it circled round and round the arena as if seeking only some avenue of escape.



**A**t length, it crept with a moan into its cage. The keeper was preparing to goad it forth when a loud cry was heard—at one of the entrances of the arena. **S**ollust appeared, breathless, half-exhausted.



Remove the Athenian! Hark, he is innocent. Arrest Arbaces! He is the murderer.



The crowd poured down upon Arbaces who looking up, beheld an awful apparition. He stretched his hand on high.

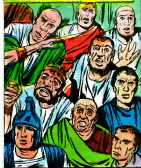
Behold! The fires burst forth against my accusers!



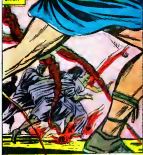
The eyes of the crowd followed the gesture of the Egyptian and beheld a vast vapour shooting from the summit of Vesuvius.



There was a dead silence. Then there arose the shrieks of women, the men started at each other. At that moment they felt the earth shake beneath their feet and heard in the distance the crash of falling roofs.



An instant more and the mountain cloud seemed to roll toward them, dark and rapid, at the same time it cast forth a shower of ashes mixed with fragments of burning stone. The crowd turned to fly—dodging, pressing, crushing against each other.



**M**eanwhile, Nydia had found her way to the small room to which Glaucus had been led and had flung herself at his feet.



It is I who saved thee. Now let me die!

Nydia, my child! My preserver!

**T**hey were interrupted by the cries of terrified people.



The mountains! The earthquake!

**A**ll fled, leaving Glaucus and Nydia to save themselves as they might. Upon learning that Zone was yet in the house of Arbaces, Glaucus took Nydia by the hand and hurried thither.



**T**he darkness increased so rapidly that Glaucus could guide his steps only with difficulty. The columns of the house seemed to reel and tremble. Leaving Nydia without, he ascended to the upper rooms.

Zone! Zone!



**A**t length, he heard her voice deeply. To rush forward, to shatter the door, to seize Zone in his arms, to hurry from the mansion, seemed to him the work of an instant.



*They hastened onward, those three. Alas, whether? They now saw not a step before them -- the blackness became after.*



*Amidst the other horrors, the mighty mountain now cast up columns of boiling water. The streams fell like scalding mud over the streets.*



*As the blackness gathered, the lightning around Vesuvius increased in their wild and scorching glare. Sometimes the jagged stones which fell broke into fragments, emitting sparks which caught whatever was combustible within their reach. Frequently, by this momentary light, parties of fugitives encountered each other.*



*Through this awful scene the Athenians made his way accompanied by Ione and the blond girl. Suddenly, a rush of hundreds swept by them, and Nydia was torn from the side of Glaucus.*

Nydia! Nydia!



*Glaucus and Ione retraced their steps -- in vain. Their friend was lost!*

How will we get to the sea now?  
Nydia, alone, knew her way in the dark.



*They continued their uncertain way amid rushing winds that bore sharp streams of burning dust and poisonous vapours.*

Oh, Glaucus! Take me to thy arms! One embrace, then let me die.

Courage yet, sweet Ione! See, torches come this way.



*The torches flashed on Glaucus and Ione. Several slaves bore coffers heavily laden. In front of them towered the lofty form of Arbaces.*

Fate smiles upon me even through these horrors. Away, Greek! I claim my word, Ione.

Touch but the hand of Ione, and I will tear thee limb from limb!



*Arbaces advanced one step. The ground shook beneath him. Lightning touched a tall column which rose behind him. Down it fell, crushing the great Arbaces.*



*Glaucus and Ione fled along the street. An avalanche of fire rushed down the mountain and forced them beneath the cover of an arch. It was there that Nydia found them.*

Ah! Thou art safe!

Follow me!  
Take my hand!



*Half-leading, half-carrying Ione, Glaucus followed his guide toward the shore. There they joined a group and put forth to sea.*



*Utterly exhausted, Ione slept on the breast of Glaucus, and Nydia lay at his feet. At last, softly, beautifully, the light dawned over the sea and the ruined city. Nydia rose gently. She bent over the sleeping Glaucus and kissed his brow.*



*She turned away, crept to the further side of the vessel and bent low over the deep.*

I cannot endure it. This love shatters my whole soul. I have saved him. Why not die happy?



*A sailor, half-dozing on the deck, heard a slight splash on the waters. He fancied he saw something white above the waves, but it vanished in an instant. When the lovers awoke, they searched for Nydia. But the blind Thesetion had vanished forever from the living world.*



The End

# EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON



Edward Bulwer-Lytton was born Edward Bulwer in London, England, on May 25, 1803. His family was well-to-do, but his father died when young Edward was four. Edward was very bright, and considered a prodigy, but his early education was somewhat haphazard. When he graduated from Cambridge in 1826, he had the reputation of a fashionable young man who was clever at fencing, boxing and playing a card game called whist.

He did not think of making literature his career until he married in 1827. Then his mother, disapproving of the match, cut off

his allowance. Forced to earn a living, Bulwer turned to writing. In 1828, his second novel, *Pelham*, was a success. People who read it enjoyed trying to guess who Bulwer used as models for the characters in his book. After that, his books were very popular.

In 1831, he became a member of Parliament, where he served for twenty-four years. He also began to edit a magazine called the *New Monthly*, through which he met Charles Dickens and Benjamin Disraeli, who later became Prime Minister of England.

When Bulwer published *The Last Days of Pompeii* in 1834, excavations of the buried Roman city near Naples had been underway for about eighty-five years. After the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A. D., in which two thousand people were killed, Pompeii was covered by twenty to thirty feet of ashes, ashes and lava deposits. Only the tops of the tallest buildings could be seen. Later eruptions of the volcano covered all trace of the city, and its remains stood in obscurity for nearly seven-hundred years.

In the sixteenth century, an Italian architect discovered part of the ruins while excavating for an underground waterway, but it was not until 1748 that work on excavating the city was begun. From 1806 to 1814, during the French occupation of Italy, large parts of Pompeii were unearthed. In the city there stood a small temple of less, the only one of its kind to survive intact to modern times. Excavations in Pompeii are still going on.

*The Last Days of Pompeii* was immediately popular. It and *Rochester* are the only two of Bulwer's many novels that are still read today.

Bulwer was also successful as a playwright. The saying, "The pen is mightier than the sword," is a line from his play *Rochester*, which he wrote in 1838.

When his mother died in 1841, Bulwer inherited her estate and added her maiden name, Lytton, to his own, becoming Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

Because of his activity in Parliament, he received the post of colonial secretary in 1858. But in 1868, he was entitled Baron Lytton, which granted him a seat in the House of Lords, and he retired from politics.

Literary careers run in the Bulwer family. Bulwer-Lytton's brother, Sir Henry Bulwer was the author of several historical and biographical works. Bulwer-Lytton's son, Edward Robert Bulwer, was a poet.

Edward Bulwer-Lytton died on June 18, 1873, at the age of 70.



# PYRAMUS AND THISBE

(from *The Age of Fable* by Thomas Bulfinch)

Pyramus was the handsomest youth and Thisbe the fairest maiden in all Babylonia. Their parents occupied adjoining houses, and neighborhood brought the young people together, and acquaintance ripened into love. They would gladly have married, but their parents forbade it. One thing, however, they could not forbid—that love should glow with equal ardor in both.

One morning, after lamenting their hard fate, Pyramus and Thisbe agreed that next night, when all was still, they would slip away from watchful eyes and go to a well-known edifice called the Tomb of Ninus, and that the one who came first should await the other at the foot of a certain tree. It was a white mulberry tree which stood near a cool spring.

That night, Thisbe cautiously stole forth, her head covered with a veil. She made her way to the monument and sat down under the tree. As she sat alone in the dim light, she saw a lioness, her jaws reeking with recent slaughter, approaching the fountain. Thisbe fled at the sight and sought refuge in the hollow of a rock. As she fled, she dropped her veil. The lioness, seeing the veil on the ground, tossed and rent it with her bloody mouth.

Pyramus, having been delayed, now approached the place of meeting. He saw in the sand the footsteps of the lion and he found the veil all rent and bloody.

"O, hapless girl," said he, "I have been the cause of thy death! I am the guilty cause, in tempting thee forth to a place of such peril, and not being myself on the spot to guard thee."

He took up the veil, carried it with him to the appointed tree and covered it with kisses and with tears. "My blood also shall stain your texture," said he and, drawing his sword, he plunged it into his heart. The blood tinged the white mulberries of the tree all red, and sinking into the earth reached the roots, so that the red color mounted through the trunk to the fruit.

By this time, Thisbe, still trembling with fear, stepped cautiously forth, looking anxiously for the youth. When she came to the spot and saw the changed color of the mulberries she doubted whether it was the same place. But she saw the lifeless body of Pyramus and she poured tears into its wounds.

She saw her veil stained with blood and the scabbard empty of its sword. "Thy own hand has slain thee, and for my sake," she said. "I, too, can be brave for once. My love is as strong as thine. I will follow thee in death. Death, which alone could part us, shall not prevent my joining thee.

"And ye, unhappy parents of us both, deny us not our united request. As love and death have joined us, let one tomb contain us. And thou, tree, retain the marks of slaughter. Let thy berries serve for memorials of our blood."

So saying she plunged the sword into her breast. Her parents ratified her wish, the gods also ratified it. The two bodies were buried in one sepulcher, and the tree ever after brought forth purple berries, as it does to this day.

# A MOUND OF RUINS

"Learn, O Lisbon, that the destroyers of our houses, palaces, churches and convents, the cause of the death of so many people and of the flames that devoured such vast treasures, are your sins, and not comets, stars, vapors and similar natural phenomena. Tragic Lisbon is now a mound of ruins." So wrote the Jesuit missionary, Gabriel Malagrida, in 1756.

His explanation is not accepted by earth scientists today, although it was a typical comment for its age on one of the worst earthquakes in history.

Lisbon, the chief port and capital of Portugal, stands on the right bank of the River Tagus. Eighteenth-century Lisbon had a population of a quarter of a million people. The city sprawled over hillsides and crowded into valleys, with many towers, spires and winding streets. It had over forty parish churches and many convents, cathedrals, monasteries and marble mansions. Its wharfs and warehouses were overflowing with rich merchandise.

On All Saints' Day, a Saturday, November 1, 1755, the churches were crowded. At 9:30 a.m., the earth began to tremble. The tremors lasted for ten minutes. Great structures shook and swayed like stalks of corn. Thousands of buildings crumbled, burying their inhabitants under piles of masonry. A dense cloud of dust settled on the scene, turning day into night.

Fires started up and fierce winds spread the flames. The city burned for six days.

Just before noon, the waters of the River Tagus rose in three huge waves,

fifteen to twenty feet high. The waves hurled themselves on the six miles of Lisbon coastline. Ships were shattered, buildings ruined, hundreds upon hundreds of persons drowned.

Chaos and panic followed the disaster. It was difficult to draw up a correct death toll. There were many exaggerations, but it was generally agreed that some fifteen thousand persons lost their lives. About twelve thousand houses were destroyed, as well as many historic buildings. Famous art collections perished, as did libraries with tens of thousands of rare books.

The earthquake affected an area of some 1,500,000 square miles. Shocks were felt all over Portugal and southwest Spain, in North Africa, France, Switzerland and northern Italy.

While sermons were preached calling on the people to repent for their sins, scientists studied the character and causes of the earthquake. The French writer Voltaire wrote a poem about it, and the German philosopher Immanuel Kant produced several papers on its physical and philosophical aspects.

The after-shocks continued for months. By August, 1756, five hundred shocks had been recorded since the day of the disaster. The British Ambassador in Madrid, Spain, wrote to the British envoy in Lisbon, "Will your earth never be quiet?"

Gradually, the earth grew calm. As much as possible of the old city was restored, but a large part of Lisbon had to be replanned and rebuilt.

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