**The Hero of Pompeii**

Opening: On a hillside overlooking the sparkling bay of Naples, the Roman city of Pompeii glimmered in the sunlight.

From the fishing boat, on which he lived, Lucas listened to the noise humming from the bars, taverns and shops around him, and to the busy tradesmen haggling on the harbour. He watched as fishermen unloaded their rich catches and merchants carried wine, oil and spices from their ships. Beyond the massive city walls he could see Pompeii’s greatest protector looming in the distance. They called it Vesuvius, the gentle mountain. The towering, majestic mountain stood silent watching over Pompeii and its people. On its steep, rocky slopes trees reached upwards towards the brilliant, golden sun. Snow glinted softly on its summit, twinkling as the sunlight shone down.

Build Up: Lucas was an orphan; his parents had died in a tremor whilst he was very young. He worked on an old, wooden fishing boat. Every day we would sail out into the glistening bay, cast his nets and hope that they would be full of fish when he pulled them up. Lucas worked for a harsh, mean captain. The captain made Lucas work all day whilst he slept. He never paid Lucas for the work he did and made him sleep on the smelly nets on the deck. Rain or shine Lucas was out on the water fishing even when the waves crashed violently against the boat making it sway dangerously. The only food Lucas got was left over fish from the previous day. He never ate fresh food it was always old and sometimes mouldy. Lucas wanted to escape but he was scared what would happen to him.

Problem: One day Lucas was selling his catch on the harbour walls. Behind him the old, wooden boat bobbed gently in the sparkling blue water. The sound of the waves was comforting to Lucas as he sat at his stall waiting for customers. The captain had gone to the forum to listen to the politicians so Lucas was alone. Lucas sat with his head in his hands, eventually his attention began to wander. Suddenly, the ground beneath his feet began to shake. It made the stone steps creak, the awning which Lucas sat under rattle and the surrounding buildings quivered. The fish fell to the floor and the wooden stall split. Above Lucas the sky began to darken and a thick cloud drifted slowly overhead. Immediately, Lucas knew something wasn’t right. A sinister feeling crept down his spine making his blood run cold. All of a sudden, Vesuvius began to roar. Its top exploded and flames ripped towards the sky. A massive cloud of silver ash rose to the heavens, twisting and bubbling in every direction until everything was in total darkness. Lightning flashed and thunder roared. Without warning, streams of molten liquid cascaded in fast rivers down the mountain slopes. The walls, streets and gardens of Pompeii disappeared beneath a suffocating blanket of ash and stones.

Resolution: Quickly, he shouted to the people on the harbour, “Hurry! Be quick! Climb onto the boat we must leave now!” People on the harbour looked at Lucas with a puzzled look on their faces. Lucas pointed to the mountain, “We have to go because Vesuvius is exploding. If we don’t leave now we will die!” Turning, Lucas ran onto the boat and began helping people onto the deck. Grabbing hands and pulling the people on board, Lucas rapidly filled the boat with as many people as he could. All around, the other ships bobbed on the choppy water as Lucas began to unite his rope to release his boat. Lucas rowed with all his strength steering his small boat out into the bay.

Ending: After a while, Pompeii got further and further away. Lucas looked back in horror. Above him, the sky was now thick with pumice and black with ash. Lucas tried to speak but suddenly he started to choke because his throat was full of dust. He could hear dogs barking and the people’s muffled screams. People fell to the floor and were covered by a thick blanket of ash.

Many years passed and the mountain grew cool and still once more. Lucas often sailed his old, wooden boat in the sparkling bay of Naples and remembered that fateful day.