

William and History

by Miriam Silver

William was doing the Romans, even though his history teacher, ole' Baggy, ole' cos' in Williams opinion he was old, even had a wife, Ginger had seen him in the butcher shop, Baggy because he kept bagging. In his recalcitrant pupil's opinion he was unfair, always taking stuff off him, like his mouse, it wasn't hurting anyone in his pocket. Confiscation, only thing he's good at.

Anyway, bet Marcus Aurelius, he loved that name, he wouldn't have that problem, he was an Emperor. Wish he'd been called Marcus, then he'd still have his mouse. Marcus wore a toga, held together with the biggest brooch you'd ever seen, covered in expensive jewels, only emperors wore one that size, bigger than a dinner plate. He'd have one even bigger when he was an emperor.

Emperors bossed everyone, if they didn't do what he said he'd throw them to the lions. Well, actually William didn't think much of that, bit over the top. He'd have to think of a better punishment for his citizens who disobeyed him.

He'd stand at the top of the steps, his soldiers round him, looking at him, watching for anyone not cheering. He would just raise his hand, slowly, everyone would be quiet and he would tell them all exactly what they should do.

Wonder if they would understand English, well if they didn't they'd have to learn. As an emperor he definitely would not do Latin or Greek, come to that he would not do arithmetic or even go to school, he'd be too busy, from an early age, with wars and important things, his father couldn't make him, he would know better than to argue with him.

The Romans ate lots of meat and no vegetables, he'd never have to eat sprouts again or salad. They did eat grapes but he'd make sure anything green was replaced with sweets and liquorice laces.

He would ride everywhere on the biggest horse, wearing silver armour over his toga, seen it all in the museum, lots of statues there, in bronze where Marcus was always wearing a special toga clipped at the neck with jewels, shoulders bare, not even wearing a vest. Bare feet in sandals, he was probably on his way to the temple where he could order a bull to be sacrificed to celebrate his victory over the Vandals.

There would be lots of wine, well actually he'd have ginger beer, didn't like wine. Then off to the Games, not football or even cricket, his generals would order their soldiers to organise chariot races and fights with spears and things.

He'd definitely ban fights with bears or any animals because he didn't like hurting anything alive and breathing. His people would love him for looking after his mouse and the wriggly things in his matchbox.

S'pose he'd have to start a campaign, have meetings, he'd organise them, about keeping fit, eat less meat, more greens like wot they tell us at school, sweets ok though.

William sighed deeply, thrust his hands into his shorts pockets, took his books and went back to the classroom where he was expected for detention. He hadn't done his Latin so he'd better learn all those rotten Roman dates.