

Cursed Tales: The Pharaoh of Asco Express

AUTHOR

JAKE R. WILSON

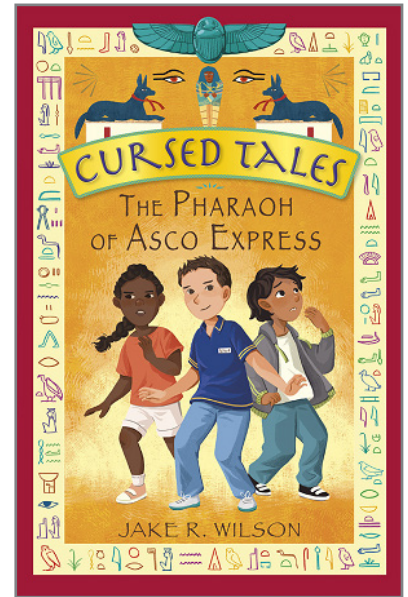
ILLUSTRATOR

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower to Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

Whatever happens, no matter what, DO NOT step into Asco Express because you might just end up leaving with more than you bargained for ...

When eleven-year-old Wesley stops by at a mysterious local shop to buy a drink, he does not realise the trouble he is getting himself into. CURSED by the fiendish Pharaoh AKAHTEN IX, Wesley and his friends, Marishana and Aiden, must solve the evil spell quickly or be trapped for all ETERNITY!

Cursed Tales is a brand-new series bringing ancient scares to life. Readers BEWARE – this story will leave you wrapped up and wanting your mummy!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jake R. Wilson was born in Kent but soon moved to the sunshine coast of Eastbourne where he currently works as an archaeologist. Leading excavations across the south east of England, Jake enjoys all things historical but tries to make room for other hobbies, such as painting, playing trading card games and watching scary movies. The origins of the *Cursed Tales* are still shrouded in mystery and Jake continues to dig for their clues all across the country.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sian has been drawing ever since she could pick up a pen. An early medieval archaeologist by training, she brings her love for the human past, cultures and folklore to her art. Her paintings are done mostly digitally, however, she still finds that she likes to sketch concepts on paper first before turning to the computer. When she's not drawing or painting, she loves reading fantasy novels, volunteering in museums and drinking tea. She lives in Oxford with her husband and two affectionate cats, Miso and Mochi.

STUDY NOTES

- *The Pharaoh of Asco Express* is a great mystery story with twists and turns in every direction. Discuss the mystery genre with the class.
 - What is a mystery?
 - What are the elements of a good mystery? Look at the below and see if you can find examples of where these

occur in the text:

- A strong hook—the mystery should intrigue the reader and prompt them to try and put together the clues to solve the mystery.
 - A crime—this event prompts the investigation and is central to the plot.
 - An investigator—this is usually the main character of the story, who is determined to solve the crime.
 - A villain—the perpetrator of the crime, the investigator is usually trying to figure out their identity and their motives.
 - Clues—a good mystery should have clues peppered throughout the story.
 - A twist—often in mystery stories, the clues can be misleading and take the investigator down the wrong path. A new clue can put a whole new slant on an investigation.
 - A conclusion—the conclusion should satisfy the reader and unveil the truth. What’s the conclusion in this story?
- The term ‘ancient Egypt’ covers quite a broad spectrum, but the date span is roughly 3000 BC/BCE to 330 AD/CE. Around 3000 BC, the first hieroglyphics emerged—though ‘ancient’ Egypt predates their use—and from 330 AD onwards, the Roman Empire (Egypt being part of it) is divided into Western/Latin and Eastern/Byzantine, which heralds the beginning of the Middle Ages. In *The Pharaoh of Asco Express*, we meet the evil Pharaoh Akahten. Research the different ancient Egyptian rulers (called pharaohs). Some pharaohs you could research are:
 - Hatshepsut
 - Akhenaten
 - Nefertiti
 - Khafre (Chephren)
 - Ramses II
 - Tutankhamun
 - Imagine you were a pharaoh. What would your name be and what would your headdress look like?
 - Egyptian picture-writing is called hieroglyphics. There were no vowels in the ancient Egyptian alphabet. There were 24 hieroglyphs, each standing for different sounds. Hieroglyphics could be read from left to right, right to left or top to bottom! Have a go at making up your own picture writing.
 - Have a go at designing your own cover for the book. You could use elements from the book’s cover or come up with your own ideas.
 - Create your own spooky shopping list. Imagine going into Asco Express and buying some ghoulish goods. What would you buy and why?