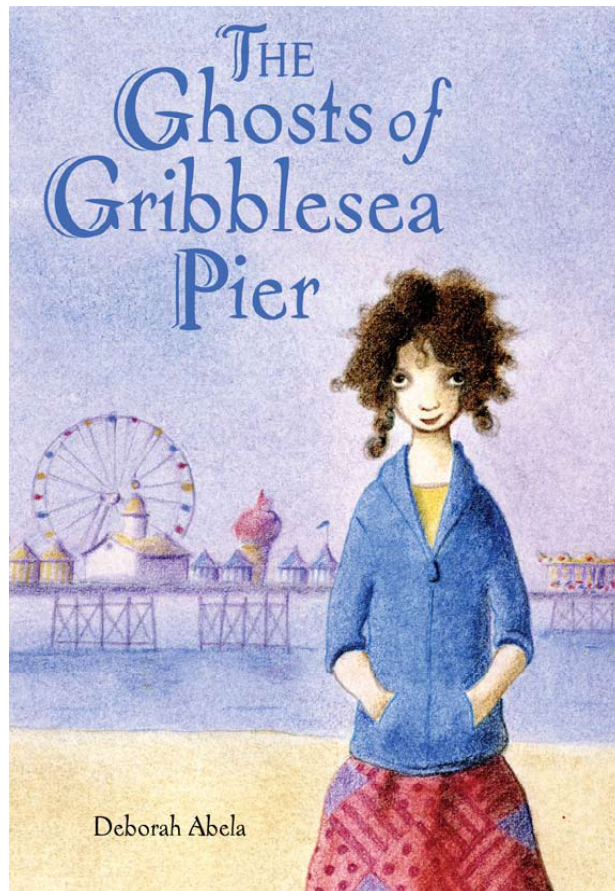




Teachers' Notes

The Ghosts of Gribblesea Pier

A novel for 8-12 year olds by Deborah Abela
www.deborahabela.com



Please find the following in these teachers' notes:

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1. PLOT SUMMARY

Aurelie Bonhoffen is a 12-year-old girl with everyways hair who lives with her extended family on *Gribblesea Pier*, a rundown amusement park in a town that once saw the pier as its centre. Aurelie's family work the pier as three generations of their family did before them, but times are grim and they face crippling taxes, dwindling audiences, mounting repairs and the constant pressure of developers to sell.

Aurelie's family are different. Their circus lifestyle, their unconventional extended family and the fact that Aurelie is the first Bonhoffen to go to school. Some of them are also ghosts, a fact that Aurelie stumbles upon on the night of her twelfth birthday.

Aurelie earns her keep at the pier by helping out in performances. She might be the back end of a cow in the marquee or the maiden who wakes from the dead when the ghost train and its screaming passengers rattle past.

The principal and fellow students at Gribblesea College think she's different, even a little bit weird, but when Aurelie strikes up a conversation with the mayor's son, Rufus, they soon become friends.

Aurelie stumbles onto Mayor Bog's secret plan to destroy the Pier. Businessman Lucien B Crook wants to build luxury new housing on the pier and Bog, for all his seemingly fair, nice-guy appearance, agrees to help. In return he will pocket a hefty sum of money and a statue will be built in his honour.

With the help of Rufus and some friendly ghosts, they thwart Bog's plans and teach him a scrooge-like lesson that will mean the pier will not only survive but will be completely revamped.

2. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When Deb was young, she always wrote. She'd read her stories out loud to see what people thought and give them away as presents whenever she could. She'd read everything she could. Bus notices, traffic signs, billboards, backs of cereal boxes. It drove her mum crazy.

After leaving school she studied teaching before travelling for three years from Australia to America, the UK to Africa, Europe and parts of Asia. During that time, she was caught in a desert sandstorm, harassed by monkeys and thrown in jail twice. She studied communications when she got back home to Australia, wrote and produced a kids' TV show for 7 years before writing the adventure/comedy series **Max Remy Superspy** (Spyforce in the US) about a young girl who goes travelling all over the world. She's co-written the **Jasper Zammit (Soccer Legend)** series with Johnny Warren and **The Ghosts of Gribblesea Pier**, about a young girl and her family who own an amusement park they share with ghosts. **Grimsdon** is Deb's latest book set in a flooded city with a group of lost children, flying machines and sea monsters. She is the current Australian National Year of Reading Ambassador and NSW Premier's Reading Challenge Ambassador.

You can find out more about spies, soccer, ghosts and flooded cities at www.deborahabela.com



3. AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Deb's family is very haunted. Only not in a terrible way. Ghosts appeared in her mother's family at all sorts of times and places, never spookily but always like a relative popping in for a cup of tea. The stories never scared Deb, so she says, and she always knew she'd like to write a story about ghosts one day, but wondered where she should set it. When she visited Brighton Pier in England, with its ice-creams, fairy floss, Ferris wheel and merry-go-rounds all overlooking the sea, she knew she'd found her answer.

4. PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:

Class discussion

A) Have you or anyone you know ever seen a ghost? Or seen something or heard a noise in the night that couldn't easily be explained.

Tell this story to the class in the most suspenseful way you can. Think about the best way to begin to set the tone of your story. What sequence of events will follow, making your listener desperate to know how will your story end? Will it answer all the questions created in your listener's mind or will it leave some tantalising aspects unanswered? Remember, it is a ghost story, so think also about your voice, when to be quiet, what part of your story could be louder and when you get to a scary part, is it scarier to use short or long sentences?

B) Aurelie's family have had a remarkable secret in their family for over 100 years and it's about ghosts. What do you think that secret could be?

C) Watch the Trailer at: http://deborahabela.com/site/Video_Clips.html

Describe what you think the story is about. What genre of novel do you think it is? From the front cover and trailer, what are the personalities of the characters in this book? At the end of studying this book, you too could make your own trailer, thinking carefully about the music, the images and text to capture the essence of the story.

5. THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

The themes of the novel revolve around family in its many forms and respecting those around us, whether young or old, rich or poor, famous or quiet. There's also the importance of preserving the past and respecting difference, whether it be in ideas, culture or nationality, for a fuller, more complete society. It looks at greed, money and what it is that really makes a person rich. Through Aurelie, we will also see the need to make your own mark and carve out your own role in the world.

- A) Being Different**
- B) What makes a family?**
- C) Bullying**
- D) What is a good friend?**
- E) What would you do for fame or fortune?**
- F) What is it to be rich?**
- G) Old versus new**
- H) Loss**

6. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/DEBATE TOPICS AND FOLLOWUP

Writing activities

A) BEING DIFFERENT

A few times in the novel, it mentions being different. Aurelie is picked on at school for being different and is even asked to the principal's office because of it.

Quotes:

Mrs Farnhumple smiled through tightened lips. 'The reason I asked you here today, is that I'm very concerned about Aurelie.'

Rolo's face creased. 'She's okay, isn't she? There's nothing's wrong with her, is there?' He placed his hand against his niece's forehead.

'No, not physically wrong, Mr Rolo, but not as they should be.' Mrs Farnhumple took a large file out of her top drawer. 'Here at Gribblesea College, we like to take a

special interest in each child. To see that they learn the essentials for becoming good, honest, upstanding human beings.'

'That's our Aurelie, all right,' Rindolf said proudly as he squeezed his hat out of shape even more.

'Yes.' Mrs Farnhumple paused. 'Certainly. You see, the thing is, Aurelie isn't quite like the other children.'

'Thank you.' Uncle Rolo adjusted his tie proudly.

'I don't necessarily mean that in a good way, Mr Rolo.' (Pg 60-61)

Questions:

- What do you think the Principal means by Aurelie being different but not in a good way? Do you agree with her?
- Mrs Farnhumple wants Aurelie to be more like the other kids in but Miss Miel tells Aurelie that *'...everyone's unique, and if we were all the same the world would be boring.'* (Pg 91) Who do you agree with and why?
- How important do you think it is to express your individuality over conforming? Is it ever better to conform rather than stand out?

Quotes:

'She (Aurelie) doesn't seem to have the same idea of things as the other children.' Mrs Farnhumple paused. 'In dress for example.'

Aurelie dropped her eyes to her lap and the cut up patchwork of materials that made up her skirt. Lilliana had sewn them together out of old costumes and favourite dresses she used to wear when she was young.

'Excuse me for asking, Mrs Farnhumple,' Rindolf leant his head to one side. 'But what does the way someone dresses have to do with anything?'

Mrs Farnhumple's mouth opened and closed as if she was gasping for breath. 'It has everything to do with everything. It's how the world sees you, it's respect, it's manners, it's the very fabric of how our society functions.' (pg 61-62)

Questions:

- Do you think it's important that everyone acts the same or believes in the same things?

- Do you think clothes are important in showing who you are? Do they really matter or is it how you behave and treat other people that's important? Or is it both? What else do you think is important?
- Lilliana Bonhoffen, Aurelie's grandmother, sees things differently: *'Bonhoffens have made a whole family history out of being different. And made their mark doing it.'* (Pg 92) How important do you think it is to make your mark? To stand out by doing something different that people take notice of?

B) WHAT MAKES A FAMILY?



Many families are different from each other in the way they act, how many people are in the family: some families have two parents some have one, sometimes there are no parents and the children are brought up by other people, like the grandparents. When Mrs Farnhumple asks to see Aurelie's parents, she brings her uncles, who help raise her in an extended family with her parents and grandmother.

Questions:

- What does family mean to you?
- How many people do you think it takes to make a family?
- What do you think are important ingredients in making a family?

C) BULLYING

Aurelie wants to tell Rufus he gave a great speech in class, but Sniggard and Charles begin their usual nastiness.

Quotes:

'What kind of a name's Aurelie?' Sniggard asked.

'It was my great-, great-grandmother's name. It means golden.'

'Golden?' Sniggard slapped Rufus's back. 'Well aren't you precious. What are you doing here, Golden Child?'

'I overheard you say you were coming here, and I wanted to...'

Sniggard slurped noisily. 'Sorry, I can't hear you.'

Charles laughed through a mouthful of brownie that flew into the air in crumbled specks.

Aurelie turned to Rufus. 'I wanted to tell you I liked your talk about the Mary Rose.'

Charles and Sniggard looked at each other before exploding in monkey-like guffaws. 'She liked your talk about that toy ship of yours,' Sniggard cried. 'What do you think of that Rufus? Fire girl thinks you're a genius. Next she'll be asking you to be her boyfriend.'

Rufus's eyes flicked around the table.

'Well?' Charles asked. 'What do you think of that?'

Sniggard's and Charles's eyes bore into him.

'Thanks but I don't need a compliment from the school freak.'

'School freak.' Charles slapped the table. 'That's great.'

Sniggard patted Rufus on the back and threw a sharp look at Aurelie, daring her to say more. She stood firm, making no attempt to move. 'I thought it was good.'

Sniggard grunted. 'She's only sucking up to you because your dad's the mayor.'

'Yeah,' Charles snorted. 'The mayor.'

Aurelie waited until their laughter withered before turning away. Rufus concentrated on the swirl of thick, chocolatey bubbles and sipped, his eyes sneaking a glance at Aurelie's every step until she disappeared into the crowd. (Pg 87-89)

Questions:

- Rufus tells Aurelie that Charles and Sniggard are his friends, yet they bully Aurelie and Rufus. How do they both deal with the bullying? Is it different for each of them?
- If you were Rufus' friend what advice would you give him to deal with Charles and Sniggard?
- How does Rufus end up dealing with them by the end of the book?
- It isn't only Rufus and Aurelie who are being bullied, but Rufus's dad, Mayor Bog is bullied by Lucien B Crook. How does Mayor Bog react to the bullying? Is it different or the same as his son?
- What lessons about themselves have Aurelie, Rufus and Bog learnt by the end of the book?
- Write a list of all the ways you think bullying can happen. Eg making fun of someone's name.

Further information and resources on bullying.

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

www.stopbullyingnow.com/resources.html

D) WHAT MAKES A GOOD FRIEND?

In the quote below, Aurelie and Rufus talk about friendship. Aurelie asks Rufus:

Quotes:

'Why do you hang around Sniggard and Charles?'

Rufus shrugged. 'They're my friends.'

'No they're not. They bully you into doing things you don't want to do.'

'They don't bully me into anything.'

'And I'll bet they don't know anything about you.'

'They know lots of things about me.'

'Do they know what you like to eat or what your favourite book is or what you want to do when you're older?' (Pg 107-108)

- What do you think makes a good friend?
- Does a good friend have to know everything about you?
- If your friend was being picked on by other kids, and you risked being picked on too if you stuck up for them, what do you think you would do?
- At first Rufus thinks Aurelie wants to be his friend because he is the mayor's son. Is this true? What do you think is the real reason?

E) WHAT WOULD YOU DO FOR FAME AND FORTUNE?

Mayor Bog has bent a few rules so he can have a statue of himself in the town square. He has made a deal with Crook that he will try and get the Bonhoffen to leave the pier so Crook can build something new. The Mayor imposes taxes, has rats released on the pier, even arranges to have Aurelie removed from her family.

Questions:

- What do you think of Mayor Bog's behaviour?
- Do you think it is ever right to bend a few rules to make something happen? If you do, when?
- At first Mayor Bog bends a few small rules, but then, in order to save his reputation, he orders the pier be damaged. How does Mayor Bog feel when he orders Cicero to destroy the pier? He will get his statue, which he has desperately wanted, but is he happy?

G) OLD VERSUS NEW

Quotes:

'This pier has been in our bones for too long for us to give it away now,' Lilliana said. 'What would we do if we let it go? It would be like giving away the thing that lets you breathe. The very thing that keeps you alive. Without the pier, we would be nothing.' (pg 53)

The businessman Lucien B Crook wants to tear the pier down because it is old and in need of repair. He sees that it was once great and important to the town but it's time to replace it with something new.

- Do you think something that is old should be thrown away if there is a newer version of it? Do you think it's right that all old things should be replaced by new? Is it important to take care of things from the past? Why?

H) LOSS

Read the following piece where Aurelie has been taken from her family and locked in a room where she can see the pier in the distance.

Quotes:

'She smiled as the pier's sign glowed. It blazed into the night until one string of lights burned out. The sign now read.

'ribblesea Pier.'

Aurelie sprang to her knees, flicked the latch on the window and forced it open. The rain lashed its way in, spilling onto her face and dress.

She held onto the window frame and threaded one leg outside, hooking the toe of her shoe into a square of lattice attached to the wall. Two Dobermans sprang into view. Aurelie snatched her leg inside as they leapt against the lattice below, snarling and barking, their sharp teeth glinting in the light from her room.

Soaked through, she pulled the window closed. She took the star ruby from her pocket and held it tightly in her hand. Huddling against the cold glass, she kept watch, afraid that if she took her eyes off it, the pier might disappear forever.' (Pg 157)

Various people throughout the novel face losing things they cherish eg The Bonhoffen family face losing the pier and their daughter, Aurelie faces losing her family and freedom when she is taken away to live with Mrs Farnhumple, Aurelie also fears she will lose her uncles when she discovers the family secret.

- Have you ever faced losing something precious to you? How did it make you feel?
- Mrs Farnhumple says the pier is wretched and a terrible place to bring up a child? Do you agree with her? Why/why not?

7. SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

A) CHARACTERS:

Read some of the character descriptions in *The Ghosts Of Gribblesea Pier*.

Mrs Sneed (Aurelie's maths teacher)

'Mrs Sneed was a tall, colourless woman and except for the blotch of red paint clinging to her dress, parts of her face and her tightly wound hair. Her silhouette was a collection of strict and measured lines. She liked maths, not children. Not those unpredictable, loud, opinionated and now paint-throwing children.' (Pg 36)

Lucien B Crook (The businessman who wants to tear down the pier)

'Lucien B Crook sniffed as he lifted his gold eyeglass and surveyed the view before him. It was a covetous, greedy sniff, punctuated by the smallest of grins tickling his red fleshy lips. His black hair was waxed into a neatly coiffed wave and sat obediently beneath a stiff hat. He stood tall. Some might have described him as good-looking. His trim face trim was cleanly shaven except for a pencil-thin moustache drawing a neat line beneath his tapered nose.' (Pg 43)

Mayor Bog (The Mayor of Gribblesea)

'Mayor Finnigus Bog wasn't a thin man and, in point of fact, he'd been called, in not so polite circles, pudgy, rotund and even chubby. Some say he was a short man worn into shortness by the controlling nature of his wife. Others say it was because his pockets were heavy from the weight of too much money.' (Pg 67)

Frank W Fotheringham (A performer at the pier)

'Aurelie squinted into the streams of dusty light in the tent. Slowly, the shabby form of a man appeared. He wore tall black boots, a sword at his side, a rumpled shirt and a floppy black hat perched on wild curly hair.' (Pg 127)

- Choose one of the descriptions and draw a picture of what this character may look like.
- What do you think the author wants you to think about these characters from the way she has described them?
- Choose one of the characters from *The Ghosts Of Gribblesea Pier* and conduct an interview with them. Make it as interesting and entertaining as you can. Find out how their childhood was, their dreams and hopes, a funny story from their life that helps us know them better.

B) WRITING A GHOST STORY

Deb's family are very haunted but you don't have to be haunted to be able to write a story about ghosts and things that go bump in the night.

- Write a story about a ghost. Ask yourself:
- Who is/are my main character(s)? Are they real or a ghost? Is your ghost happy being a ghost? What is their personality like? Are they happy? Sad? Grumpy? Do they go spooking live people? Do they cause trouble? Will your story be spooky? Funny? Suspenseful? Sad?
- You may like to do this as a graphic story, using cartoon panels that help you to tell your story. Make sure it has a strong beginning, an interesting sequence of events in the middle and a satisfying end.

C) WELCOME TO THE PHANTASMAGORIA! MAKE A POSTER

This is the flier that Rufus wrote to try and entice people to help rebuild the pier.

Quotes:

***Welcome to Bonhoffen's Phantasmagoria!
Gribblesea Pier invites you to partake in a weekend
of repairs and rejuvenation of Gribblesea's finest
attraction. In return you will enjoy a never-before-
seen performance of spectacular proportions that
will delight, amaze and bedazzle. (Pg 143)***

- Create an exciting poster to invite the town to save Gribblesea Pier. What words will you use to create excitement and what will you say about the performance that will make people run to help? What picture you will put on the poster? Make it as appealing as you can!
- It can be a hard copy of a poster or you can create a virtual poster at:
<http://edu.glogster.com>

D) MAKE A VIDEO/POWERPOINT TRAILER

- Make a 30 second trailer that acts as a teaser for the book. Make readers want to grab the book. Start with an idea you think that will create intrigue and interest then storyboard your idea before you start to create your video. Decide if you will use actors, drawings, photos and how you will move from one image to another eg dissolve, cut, wipe etc.
- A good site to use is <http://animoto.com>

E) PERFORM A READERS' THEATRE OR PLAY OF A CHAPTER

I have supplied a transcript example below.

Dramatic excerpt from

The Ghosts of Gribblesea Pier

Chapter 27 A Poisoned Confession Pg 202-209

Aurelie and her Uncles Rolo and Frank have discovered that Mayor Bog knows something about a plan to destroy the pier. They pay a late night visit to the mayor to find out exactly what he knows.

Characters: Aurelie, Narrator, Rolo, Rindolf, Frank, Mayor Bog.

Narrator: A thick mist curled into the night and filled the air with an eerie sense of the dread. Of unease. Of restlessness. Of ghosts. Rindolf stood in a narrow lane, not far from Mayor Bog's house.

(Rindolf wore a pair of long black pants and a black velvet morning coat. He'd greased back his curls and swung a gold-edged cane into the air.

Rindolf: How do I look?

Rolo's hand rested on the handle of a large sword.

Rolo: I didn't know you could scrub up so well. And what about me?

Narrator: Rindolf stood back and examined his brother's high hat with a white fluffy feather, long suit coat and bright, embroidered waistcoat.

Rindolf: I like the touch of colour in the waistcoat.

Aurelie: And me?

Narrator: Aurelie stood before her uncles in her silk dress from her ghost train performance, complete with a bloodied gash to the head. But this time she wore a long, blonde wig.

Rolo: Is there a finer looking young girl? Oh dear.

Narrator: Rolo pulled out a hanky and dabbed his eyes.

Rolo: If I cry now my face powder will run.

Narrator: Rindolf searched the dimly lit laneway.

Rindolf: All we need now is Frank.

Rolo: How can a ghost, with all of eternity on his side, always be late?

Narrator: Frank's wizened face appeared through the mist.

Frank: I'm here. Just because I'm dead doesn't mean I don't want to look good.

Narrator: He held open one side of his navy jacket with fringed gold epaulets.

Rindolf: Is that an axe wound?

Narrator: Frank smiled and opened the jacket further to reveal a deep gash in his side.

Frank: If I lean far enough over, I can almost spilt myself in two. It might come in handy if the old guy refuses to cooperate.

Rolo: It's unlike you to want to outdo everyone else?

Frank: Can't hold back my natural qualities.

Rindolf: Aurelie, are you sure you're going to be okay with this?

Aurelie: Are you kidding? I've never been this excited about a performance. Now let's go save our pier.

Narrator: The group of four set off. They rounded a bend that led them to Bog's house, which was surrounded by a perfectly manicured hedge. A hedge the uncles and Frank walked straight through.

Aurelie (whispering) Hey!

Narrator: Rolo reappeared through the bush.

Rolo: Sorry. Forgot you can't do that.

Narrator: Rolo lifted Aurelie over the hedge while Rindolf grabbed her on the other side. Frank disappeared through a wall of the house and unlocked the front door, opening it with a deep bow. They tiptoed up the spiral staircase. All except Frank who floated a few steps ahead of them. He wafted through the walls on the second floor, before silently beckoning the others to a room at the end of the corridor. Mayor Bog was in his bed, a sleep mask across his eyes. He tossed and turned, filling the bedroom with a rumbling snore.

Rindolf: Looks like he isn't sleeping so soundly. Wonder why that is?

Rolo: Let's find out shall we? Places everyone.

Narrator: Aurelie lay down on the settee and arranged her dress so that it draped gently around her. Rindolf and Rolo positioned themselves on either side of the bed, and Frank disappeared. Rolo leant over Bog.

Rolo: (wailing) Ooooooh.

Narrator: Mayor Bog kept snoring. Rolo wailed a little louder.

Rolo: Ooooooh.

Narrator: The Mayor snuffled and snorted and rolled over. Rolo frowned. He leant in closer and let out another sad wail. Mayor Bog waved his hands.

Mayor Bog: I'm trying to sleep, Mrs Bog.

Narrator: Rolo straightened up, took a jug of water from Bog's bedside table and poured it over him. Mayor Bog leapt forward, lifted his soaked sleep mask and ogled the two oddly dressed strangers before him.

Mayor Bog: Who are you and how did you get in here?

Rindolf: (With a posh voice) We're simply two men who'd like to ask you a few questions.

Mayor Bog: Get out. This instant. I am Mayor Bog and I demand that-'

Narrator: He suddenly became aware of his bedside table hovering beside him.

Mayor Bog: And what have you done to...?

Narrator: He waved his hands above the table.

Mayor Bog: How can you do that? Where are the wires?

Narrator: The table slowly lowered to the floor.

Mayor Bog: What is happening? Who are you? What do you want?

Narrator: Rolo walked slowly round the room with his fingers tapping together before him. Each time he tapped, a candle beside him lit in a burst of flames.

Rolo: What do we want?' Mmm...what do we want?

Narrator: Aurelie sat up from the settee.

Aurelie: We'd like some answers, Mayor Bog.

Mayor Bog: Aaah! How many of you are in here?

Aurelie: That doesn't matter. What does matter is what you know about the pier.

Mayor Bog: How dare you come charging into a man's house with your tricks and illusions and-

Narrator: Aurelie shook her head and wagged her finger. 'Aurelie: These are not tricks. These are the workings...' (Smiling) of ghosts.

Narrator: Rolo wailed into Bog's face for good measure.

Rolo: Ooooooh!

Mayor Bog: Ghosts? (laughs) I have met people who will do many things to get what they want, but pretending they are ghosts is the most ridiculous-

Aurelie: Oh, we're not pretending.

Narrator: Mayor Bog's blankets swept from him and hovered in the air before dropping to the floor.

Mayor Bog: I....I...it's...

Rindolf: What you are planning to do to the Pier?

Mayor Bog: I'm not planning to do anything to...

Narrator: A row of books cascading from a shelf.

Aurelie: There was something I forgot to tell you. My ghost friends here get very upset when they feel they're being lied to.

Mayor Bog: I'm not lying, I'm simply saying...

Narrator: Two long velvet curtains flung aside. The double windows flew open and a cold wind blustered into the room, followed by Frank's wavering appearance.

Mayor Bog: How...where...?'

Rindolf: Watch what happens next. It's quite something.

Narrator: Frank hovered over the mayor. He gave him a stare laced with sadness before lifting his shirt.

Frank: Someone seems to have given me this nasty gash.

Narrator: Frank wheezed and staggered to one side then another, threatening to fall on Bog. He groaned and gave a convincing, if not overdone performance of a man dying in extraordinary pain while floating in midair. He fell across Bog's bed without causing a ripple of movement. Rindolf and Rolo clapped.

Aurelie: It was a little exaggerated at the end, but you get the message.

Mayor Bog: I don't feel so well.

Narrator: Aurelie approached the bed.

Aurelie: Mayor Bog, the pier's our home. Why do you want to see it ruined?

Mayor Bog: I don't want it ruined. Truly. And I never meant to hurt anyone it's just that...the pier is wanted by someone very powerful and it's he who...

Aurelie: Yes?

Mayor Bog: He wants the pier...destroyed.

Narrator: Frank pulled the two halves of his body together and floated to his feet.

Frank: Destroyed? How?

Mayor Bog: I...I don't know.

Aurelie: Please Mr Bog?

Mayor Bog: I didn't ask.

Rolo: Who's going to do it?

Mayor Bog: A man called Cicero.

Rindolf: Cicero who?

Mayor Bog: He didn't say. I don't even know if Cicero is his real name. I warned him not to hurt anyone.

Aurelie: Why would you agree to destroy the pier?

Mayor Bog: I don't know anymore. First it was for money then...

Rindolf: Money? You would do this for *money*?

Mayor Bog: No, not just money. There was position and promises and guarantees and...and...

Rolo: Who offered you these guarantees and promises?

Mayor Bog: Crook.

Narrator: Rolo turned to Rindolf.

Rolo: Crook? The businessman who wanted to buy the pier.'

Mayor Bog: He said he was going to restore it. Make it better. Grander.

Rindolf: And you believed him? So he'll have the pier whether we like it or not.

Mayor Bog: I never meant...it was only because....I should have stopped this log before now. What are you going to do with me?

Rolo: What I'd like to do is send you to the deepest, darkest reaches of a bottomless, tormented eternity. But as it happens, you're much more useful to us alive right now.

Mayor Bog: I'll do anything. I promise. Anything you'd like.

Rolo: You bet you will, and for now that means coming with us.

8. REVIEWS FOR *THE GHOSTS OF GRIBBLESEA PIER*

Abela weaves a good old-fashioned tale, replete with evil money-grubbing villains and an independent heroine who battles injustices at school and on the home front. The friendship that develops between Aurelie and the mayor's son is a wonderful exploration of being true to oneself and avoiding peer pressure. This fast-paced, engaging, and charming story has echoes of Jeanne Birdsall's "Penderwicks" (Knopf) and some Dickensian elements, but in the end this is just a finely executed story of family and friendship and the ties that bind a community.—**Mary Beth Rassulo, Ridgefield Library, CT, School Library Journal, USA**

This Australian import, set in England, offers lovers of light supernatural fare a quickly paced, skillfully plotted yarn. Like Rufus, tween readers will also easily relate to the bullying Aurelie takes at school for being different (hard to avoid in the line of work her family is in), while they will be bolstered by her resilience and by her pride in her unique skills and her eccentric but loving family. Young fans of Eva Ibbotson will take to this like a ghost to a haunted house. **The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, USA**

And in Australia as **THE REMARKABLE SECRET OF AURELIE BONHOFFEN**

'Abela deftly juxtaposes the everyday and the supernatural, and has a feel for quirkily funny dialogue and dramatic incident. Her story moves at a brisk clip and is graced with a cast of likeable eccentrics.' **Rosemary Sorensen, The Weekend Australian, Mar 09.**

'Abela knows how to structure and pace a good yarn and keeps the action coming . . . As filling as a waffle from a funfair and just as much fun.' **Margaret Robson Kent, Magpies, March 09**

'Building on the hugely successful Max Remy series, Abela has created a rich world of intrigue and adventure. Told with the right balance of action and comedy, The Remarkable Secret of Aurelie Bonhoffen will delight Max Remy fans with this new strong heroine.' **Ben Beaton, Junior Bookseller and Publisher Mar 09**

'(a)...spectacular story for mystery and adventure lovers.' **Girlpower Magazine 2009**