Thursday 28th March

Eleanor Thompson

Dark magic

“I read that there was a masked magician and he was the greatest magician in the world, but it went wrong, so wrong. In 1813, he decided to bury himself alive for his next trick; but it wasn’t the happy ending he had hoped for. He died a slow and horrible death but here’s the twist: people have claimed to have seen him roaming the streets carrying a shovel; a shovel which should have saved his life. Those who were unfortunate enough to have seen him were soon driven into madness.” Gracie whispered in a distant voice then she shivered.

They both stood on Salt Sea Beach, the wet sand crept into their scuffed school shoes, which were sinking slightly into the earth below. Tommy Timber watched the waves retreat then rush back to their feet, however, Gracie’s feet started to wiggle and squirm.

She began to shake violently and her eyes flew wide open. Her hands clapped onto her ears and an ear-splitting shriek flooded out of her mouth, screaming into Tommy’s ears. “He’s here! He’s here!” She whispered breathlessly, and with one final screech, her face turned completely pale. She collapsed; still shaking uncontrollably.

Tommy’s heart started to race – he had to call for help. They were alone on the beach. Except for, except for one other. The figure seemed to be digging a hole, which ran deep into the depths of the earth. Tommy frantically ran over to the man and stopped suddenly when he saw the pearl-white mask which sat on the bridge of a bent nose. A crooked, toothy grin pierced a pale face and warts of all shapes and sizes protruded from his thin, bone cheeks. A grubby tailcoat cascaded down his slim frame and a black top hat shadowed his sinister silhouette.

A large shovel lay on the ground; its wooden handle warped and battered. The metal blade shone into his disbelieving eyes: it was engraved in what seemed like names - they were all crossed out. Except for one. His name. **‘Tommy Timber.’** His eyes darted towards the man’s face. The magician picked up the shovel. “How do you know my na-” Tommy whispered.

“Hello Tommy, I guess you’ve heard of me,” he snarled, “I am the masked magician. Mighty, right, sweet dreams!” A pair of leather gloves pushed Tommy into the endless pit.