

Adventures in the Wallace Collection

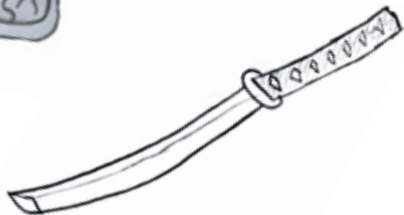
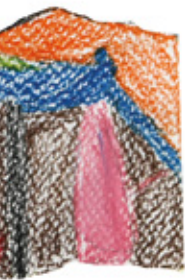
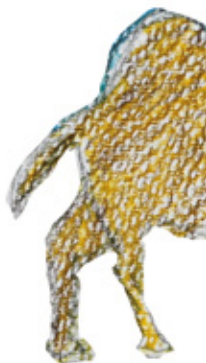
A
YOUNG
CURATORS
STORYBOOK



Adventures in the Wallace Collection

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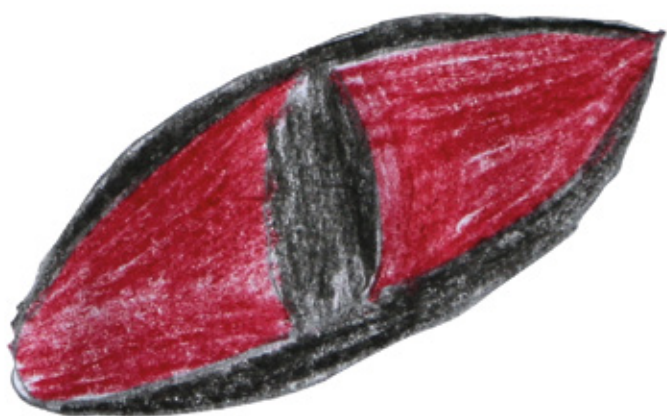
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THE
WALLACE
COLLECTION



The Dark Rider



The Dark Rider

It was an ordinary day at the Wallace Collection, maybe too ordinary... Dylan, Nika, Honeko and Elsa - the Year 4 members of the gallery's *Young Curators* team - were enjoying their visit, excitedly looking for new works of art to present at their next tour.

They were a lovely bunch. Elsa was a cheeky funny girl, Nika loved art and was always smiling, Honeko was forever sensible, and Dylan was quiet but full of surprises!

The four friends were standing in the Front State Room admiring Thomas Sully's portrait of Queen Victoria. They were writing down their observations when all of a sudden they heard a ferocious roar. The noise echoed through the entire building and everyone was petrified. The Young Curators looked at each other, scared yet curious to find out what was happening.

Honeko was struck by an idea that left him in disbelief. It couldn't be...

"I think I know where that noise is coming from. It's the lion in Horace Vernet's painting – *The Lion Hunt*," he said in shock.

"How do you know?" asked Dylan.



The Dark Rider

Elsa always trusted Honeko, which is why even in this most extraordinary circumstance she knew he was probably onto something.

“Honeko, what do you mean? What’s happening?” cried Nika, her smile replaced by a worried frown.

Honeko gathered them close. He explained how he had once read about an unusual event that happened years ago at another museum. He thought it was only a legend. When touched by a child the paintings and objects seemingly came to life, causing great havoc. The only way to prevent chaos and destruction was to stun the newly living objects with a beam of light. The Young Curators thought immediately of the shiny shields in the armouries.

“We need to get there fast!” Honeko exclaimed.

Racing down the corridor through the Sixteenth Century Gallery, they finally arrived at European Armoury II. Just at that moment, Elsa, Nika and Honeko heard a scream. Just further down from them, they spotted Dylan running frantically from the very same lion. The three of them quickly sought help and touched Lord Beckett – the immense equestrian armour riding high on his horse. Both rider

The Dark Rider

and mare immediately came to life. Lord Beckett wasted no time. He raised his shiny sword, catching the light streaming from the window, and shined it into the lion's eyes. The beast fell to the ground and into a deep sleep. "Our hero! Lord Beckett is our hero!" the four friends cheered.

Their celebration was cut short when before long they saw Lord Beckett's eyes turn evil. He told them to be silent. The children didn't say a word. In a menacing tone, he told them about his life's desire to escape the museum with his army in tow, and return to his life as a knight.

The children were frozen with fear... all except Dylan! He was suddenly struck by an idea and started to run. He ran past the dark knight. He ran like he had never run before - straight to the Great Gallery. Dylan remembered the statue of Hercules and decided to go and ask him for help.

Meanwhile, the other three had no choice but to obey Lord Beckett. He took them to his army of soldiers and the Young Curators were ordered to bring them to life.



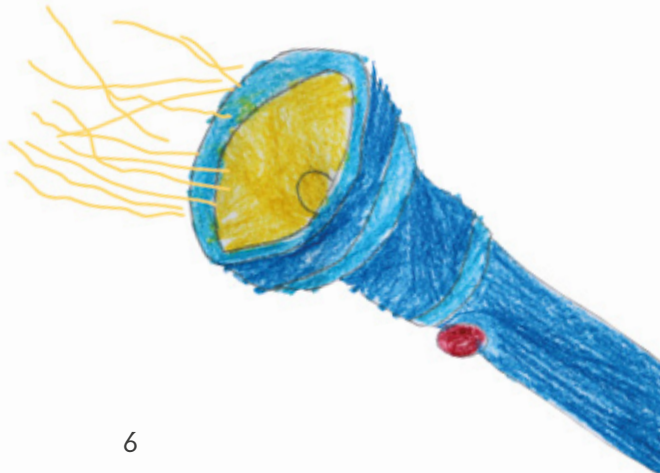
The Dark Rider

It was only minutes later when Dylan returned to his friends, this time with Hercules, who had been transformed from his statuesque state into a living demigod.

Facing the evil Lord Beckett, Hercules gave him two options. The first was to go back to being the museum object he had always been, the second was to face Hercules in a duel and be turned to dust. You can guess what the dark knight chose. In the end, Lord Beckett decided he was happy enough to be one of the Wallace Collection's most famous pieces, posing regally on his horse forevermore.

Now that that was settled, the children still had to deal with the rest of the army. Grabbing torches from the supplies cupboard, Dylan threw them to his friends.

"One, two, three – go!" They all switched on their torches and shined them at the menacing army. The brilliant light reflected off of their shields. One by one, Lord Beckett's soldiers started falling to the ground. Nika's smile was back, Honeko and Elsa were jumping for joy, and Dylan was quietly enjoying every moment of this adventure, proud of himself and his friends.



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There was one more order of business – the lion. Mighty Hercules carried him to his painting where the last magical moment of the day happened – he was sucked back into it, and everything went back to normal.

What an adventure! Honeko, Nika, Dylan and Elsa were ready to go home. As they walked through the Back State Room towards the front door, they again passed in front of Thomas Sully's portrait of Queen Victoria. The four children were certain that this time, the young royal gave them a little wink.



The Dark Rider







The Time Travelling Clock

The Time Travelling Clock

It was a warm summer's day in July. The sun was still out shining in the sky, even though it was after 7 p.m. Anahi, Elly, Gabriel, and Javier had just spent a full day at art camp. They had been drawing seascapes inspired by famous Dutch Golden Age paintings. Gabriel was eager to get to the Wallace Collection to see his favourite one: *Dutch Ships Coming to Anchor* by Willem van de Velde the Younger.

The children were at the gallery waiting for their mother who was Head of Security. They loved their experience after-hours. It felt like the whole collection belonged to them. To make themselves useful the children would take care of the galleries, cleaning and dusting to make sure that everything was sparkling for the next day's visitors.

"Has anyone brought a torch?" said Elly. "I do not think I will be able to dust the Astronomical Clock with so little light."

The shade of the window in the Back State Room was drawn.

Javier cheekily rolled his eyes. "You're always taking care of that clock."

He was right. Elly had a strong feeling when approaching it. There was something simply magical about it.



The Time Travelling Clock

Heading towards her favourite object, Elly was feeling tired after her long day at camp. Standing up on a stool, trying to reach up high, she lost her balance. “Uh-oh!”

Reaching in front of her to steady herself, she accidentally grabbed onto the figure at the top of the clock. It was Father Time, scythe in hand.

CCCCLLLLLOOOONNNNGGGG!

Suddenly, the lights turned off. Everything went dark. “Come quick! There are candles flickering in the Back State Room,” shouted Elly to Javier. “I don’t remember this piece of furniture being here,” Javier replied puzzled, running in from the Dining Room. Then he paused. “I think someone is in the front hall. Let’s go see!”

“Hello children! Shall I assume Father Time has brought you here? Allow me to introduce myself. I am Richard and this is my wife Amelie...” It seemed Kronos had brought them back to the year 1885, for here before them was Sir and Lady Richard Wallace!



The Time Travelling Clock

Javier and Elly were stunned – they could not believe their eyes. We know so much about you!”

Sir Richard Wallace chuckled, “Allow me to explain the little trick I added to the clock...”

Meanwhile, upstairs in the first floor galleries, Gabriel and Anahi paused from sketching Gabriel’s favourite artwork.

“Anahi, am I going crazy, or are these ships really moving?” Anahi took a closer look. “I don’t think it’s you, because I see it too...”

Water started splashing about and the sailors started to dart from one end of the ship to the other. Three were already making their way down the frame.

“Ahoy there! Mind lending us a hand getting out of here?” said a voice from the painting. “All you’ve got to do is reach inside.”

“I wouldn’t do that if I were you.” Gabriel and Anahi turned on their heels. The Laughing Cavalier (always smiling) approached them. “The last time the sailors escaped, it took a week for Sir Richard Wallace to get them back inside.”



The Time Travelling Clock

“How are we to undo this mess?” asked Anahi.

The Laughing Cavalier replied, “It’s very simple, solve the following riddle: *I am gold and have two arms. I also have a big head. What am I?* If you need any help, follow the falcon.” He broke into a fit of giggles. “I just love it when this happens!”

Puzzled more than ever before, Gabriel and Anahi were off to find Javier and Elly.

Recapping everything that had happened, the quartet had a think. Anahi and Javier suddenly shouted “A key! The answer is a key!” In a flash the four of them were off to the Dutch Galleries, where they knew they would find portrait P96, *Boy with a Falcon*. “Hello children, it’s been a while since someone set the old clock back in time.” Swooping around them in the air was the boy’s pet falcon. Landing on a small wooden object, Javier had an idea. “Do you think the key is inside of that triptych?”

Opening up the two folding panels, a slight key fell to the floor. “Thank you!” they shouted in delight to the boy, and headed off to see if it was the one that would set things right.



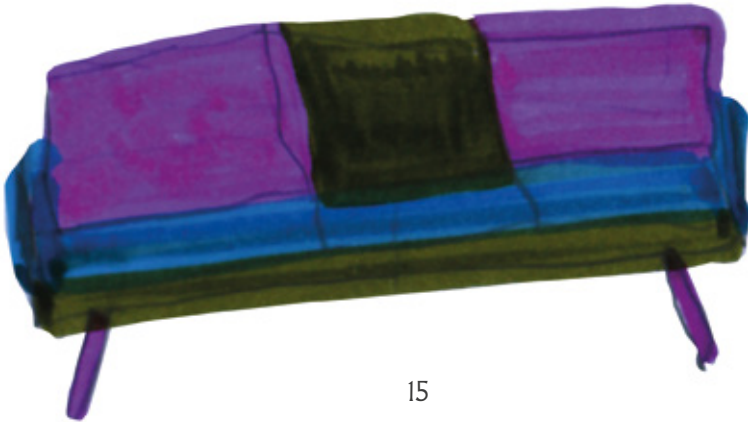
The Time Travelling Clock

Standing in front of the Astronomical Clock, holding their breath, Elly found the keyhole and wound up the clock.

CCCCLLLLLOOOONNNNGGGG! It started chiming. Suddenly, the lights went out. A gust of air blew through the galleries, and then the electricity came back on...

"Children!" a distant voice echoed. "I have been looking for you for the past 20 minutes. Where have you gone off to? I am starting to think that you know this museum better than I do!" It was their mother, rounding the corner. They were so relieved.

Javier tucked the golden key into a hiding place, before catching up to his siblings as they left the building. The children were buzzing with chatter. They could not wait to meet Sir and Lady Wallace again.



The Time Travelling Clock



The Secret Behind the Smile





The Secret Behind the Smile

One wet and cold Saturday evening in February, Richard wandered down the corridors of the Wallace Collection – one hand dug firmly in his pocket, the other holding tightly onto a weathered notebook. He was scouring the collection hoping to find enough information to write a 600 word essay on the lifestyle of nomadic tribes in the Middle East. His teacher advised that looking at artwork gave you ‘great inspiration’ and ‘different interpretations of life’. Richard didn’t believe that. He glanced up at the clock...

“Ladies and gentlemen. This museum will close its gates in ten minutes time. Please make your way to the entrance. I hope you have enjoyed your day. Thank You...”

Richard heard the announcement with dismay. The sky was darkening outside and so too were the lights inside the Wallace Collection. The visitors drifted down the staircase towards the exit, leaving the galleries eerily quiet. Richard, however, had other plans.

“Leave! I barely wrote 50 words!”

He crept quickly and quietly to a place he knew well – The Oriental Armoury. “Ok right, I need to find a place to hide,” he whispered aloud to himself in panic. Richard found a cupboard for



The Secret Behind the Smile

cleaning supplies, and crawled right in. He closed the doors quietly and sank down in the darkness, terrified as he heard the guards pass by patrolling the area for any leftover visitors.

Max wasn't sure how much time had passed — it felt like forever. Low on courage, he dared himself to push open the cupboard door and take a peek outside into the gallery. It was nearly pitch black. All around him was complete silence. He took a torch from his pocket.

Richard made his way over to his intended target — a luxurious painting entitled *The Arab Tale Teller* by Horace Vernet — and took a seat. He retrieved his notebook, ready to start working.

First question: Write an introduction and include how you chose your source. If it is a piece of artwork, consider these questions:

- What is it made of?
- How does it reflect the life style of nomads?
- How did the painter/sculptor choose to ...etc.

Richard moaned under his breath. He was stuck on the first question... He tried to put his pen to the notebook when he was suddenly struck by an idea.



The Secret Behind the Smile

“I can touch it! No one is around!”

Richard knew it was strictly forbidden but he did it anyway. Slowly and steadily, he inched his index finger closer and closer to the painting and finally touched its smooth surface. He didn't even have time to consider whether it was canvas or wood before he passed out.

*

Somewhere, under the scorching Arabian sun, a tribe of nomads was settling down in the shade of a fig tree to listen to the wise man of the tribe tell fascinating stories of sorcery, betrayal and adventure. All of them were starting to feel drowsy under the burning sun and, after a few hours of enchanting tales, were ready to head back to their tents for a rest. That's when the group noticed a figure in the bushes.



The Secret Behind the Smile

There was a stunned silence throughout the crowd. The Chief rushed towards Richard's side. Speaking in soothing tones, the Chief looked down. "Who are you, boy? Why are you here?"

Richard found himself unbelievably and magically inside the painting!

"The name's Richard. I remember a museum... I have no idea what..." Richard broke off in confusion. He was being honest. The chief could tell. He had some men take him to a large tent.

There Richard met a boy roughly the same age as him. His name was Abdul and he was the Chief's son. Over the next two hours, the pair sat together exchanging accounts of their lives and what might have brought them together. Before long, night fell, and it was time for the tribe to retire.

Richard tried to sleep but could not. He snuck outside for some fresh air and water. Approaching the well, he noticed the silhouettes of all the camels being led out of their enclosure in the distance.



The Secret Behind the Smile

Not overthinking it, Richard headed back to the tent...

The next morning, Abdul shook Richard awake. "Someone stole all the camels last night." This information struck Richard like a knife. He told Abdul what he had seen. It didn't take long for the boys to come up with a plan. "Are you going to come with me to uncover this horrible crime with 'detective Abdul & Co.?' " asked Abdul. Richard smiled back, and the boys ran off towards the market.

*

It took them the whole morning, but the boys finally came face-to-face (well more face-to-snout) with their goal. There was no sign of the thief, but Abdul immediately recognised his tribe's camels. They did not notice the shadowy figure looking at them with a worried and frightened expression.

"Uh-oh," thought the taleteller, "They're after me. I have to deal with these boys..."



The Secret Behind the Smile

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“Who sold you this camel,” Abdul asked a man with a green cloak standing near the herd. The boys needed a clue and quickly. “It was a man in a grey and white striped robe. He went that way,” the buyer replied.

The boys were off. “Look over there,” pointed Richard. “I recognise that man,” Abdul growled. “The taleteller! I knew it! Give up, you traitor,” shouted Abdul with all his might.

“Oh really?” the taleteller sneered. Out of his robe, he pulled a shiny, glistening, samurai sword...

*

It glittered menacingly in the sun like a ruby, slick and blood stained. Abdul and Richard stood there paralysed with fear.



The Secret Behind the Smile

Pointing his sword in their direction, the taleteller was preparing himself to mount the nearest camel to make a quick escape. Alarmed by the commotion, the animal kicked the assailant, sending the taleteller flying up into the air and landing unconscious on the dusty ground. "You can't win now," said Richard. Abdul let out a sigh. "We did it!" Richard couldn't help but feel incredibly proud.

*

With the camels roped together, the boys led the animals back to the camp. "Thank you stranger!" the chief said, practically crying with joy.

That night there was a celebratory banquet in honour of the two boys. Despite the jubilation, Richard began to feel homesick. Falling asleep that night in his tent, he wished he could go home.

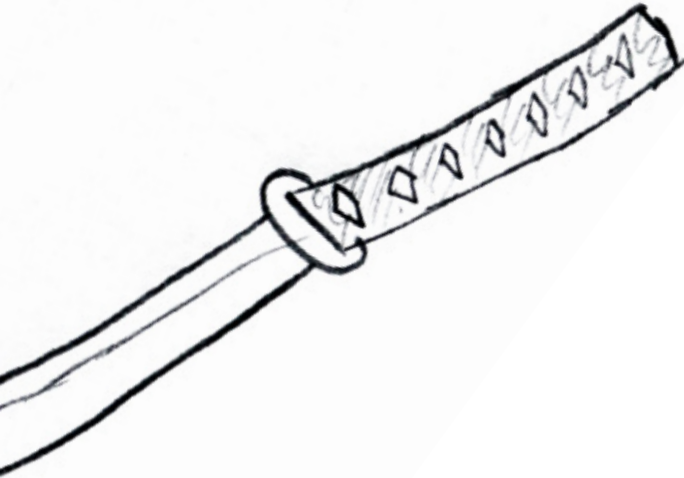


The Secret Behind the Smile

When he opened his eyes, Richard found that he was once again back in the dark corridors of the Wallace Collection, the heat of the blazing sun now a long lost memory. He gathered his notebook and began to write.

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A few days later, Richard's mother picked up an essay that had been left on the kitchen counter. "An A*," she cried. "Fantastic! Where did you find all of this information?" Richard secretly smiled.



Key works of art used throughout the stories:

The Dark Rider

The Lion Hunt, Horace Vernet (1836) [P585]

Equestrian Armour, Germany (c. 1480) [A21]

Hercules overcoming with Achelous in the form of a Bull,

Florence, Italy (c. 1640) [S124]

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The Time Travelling Clock

A Boy with a Falcon, Joan van Noordt (c. 1665) [P96]

Astronomical Clock, France (c. 1750) [F98]

The Laughing Cavalier, Frans Hals (1624) [P84]

The Adoration of the Magi, Netherlands (c. 1500–30) [S279]

Calm: Dutch Ships coming to Anchor,

Willem van de Velde the Younger (c. 1655) [P137]

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The Secret behind the Smile

The Arab Tale Teller, Horace Vernet (1833) [P280]

Sword with scabbard, Japan (14th or 15th century) (OA1694)

About the Young Curators

Young Curators is a creative partnership between the Wallace Collection and St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School, Marylebone.

This after school programme is comprised of Year 4 to Year 6 students who prepare and present public tours and special projects inspired by the works of art at the Wallace Collection.

Year 4: Elsa, Dylan, Nika and Honeko

Year 5: Anahi, Elly, Gabriel and Javier

Year 6: Armand, Louise, Joseph

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