

The Street Beneath His Feet

Where does that go? Wondered Ali, as he watched the leftover rainwater trickle along the side of the road. It had been raining on and off all day, but he was determined to get out of the house today. He was dressed in his red waterproof coat, that was three sizes too big. His Mum always made him wear it even if she saw the tiniest of clouds.

Yesterday, the weather was grey. It had been grey for a few days now, raining then stopping, then raining again- never giving the sun a chance to peak through. Ali looked up. The sky had turned black and the air felt heavy, yet it wasn't cold. Splash. A warm droplet of water fell onto Ali's cheek. "Oh great!" he muttered sarcastically to himself. He scanned the street for somewhere to take cover. As the rain came down heavily, Ali ran towards the bus shelter.

Before he reached the shelter, he slipped and fell into what he thought was a puddle. However, this puddle was flowing like a river. As Ali tried to escape quickly, the water gushed over his head and submerged his whole body. Ali floated down the street, like a poo stick on a river. The torrential rain had flooded the whole street. He swam slowly and falteringly. In the distance, Ali could see orange cones and roadwork signs being sucked down an open manhole in the ground. The water was rushing down like a giant waterfall. Any minute now, it would be Ali's turn too. He held his breath and waited for the current to pull him down.

Clinging on for his life, Ali had grabbed the first thing he found, a thick cable sticking out either side of the storm drain. He was hanging like a monkey in a tree, waiting for the water to stop flowing over him. Eventually, the water began to calm and Ali opened his eyes. He looked up and saw a tiny hole that looked like the sun in a strange night sky. He soon realised that he had fallen down the storm drain and he was now beneath the street. How was he going to get out?

His knuckles gleamed white as he held onto the cable. As he started to breathe heavily, he frantically searched for a way out. He looked up. Nothing. The street was at least 4m high and there was no way of getting back up there. He looked down. A ladder. Swinging his body backwards and forwards, Ali built up enough momentum to leap down onto the ladder. He climbed down deeper

into the ground.

After what seemed like hours, he finally reached the bottom and jumped off the ladder. His feet splashed into a shallow puddle. Shivering, Ali slowly turned around. The darkness made it impossible to see anything. The only sign of light was the pinhole of daylight hundreds of metres above his head. He had to feel along the walls to guide his path. The damp, slimy walls led him down a narrow, wet tunnel. As Ali started to feel helpless, his hand stumbled across a heavy iron handle. I wonder what this does he wondered. He tried pulling it but nothing happened. Twisting it to the left, still nothing. Turning it to the right, click. A latch opened and a secret door flooded the tunnel with light. What had Ali discovered?

Nervously, Ali took two steps forward and stood in the doorway. An old cobbled street ran down the middle of two rows of abandoned, derelict houses. One house had no roof and another had shutters swinging open. An eerie silence gave Ali goosebumps. It was the spookiest thing he had ever seen! Confused, Ali began to tiptoe along the stone-cold cobbles. How could a whole street exist underground? Who could have lived here? How could it have been forgotten? Questions whizzed through Ali's head. With a deep breath, he peered in through an open window. On a giant wooden table in the middle of the room, Ali could see a box oozing with jewels. Sparkling through the dust, diamonds, rubies and emeralds laid forgotten about. Something about that box reminded him of a story he had read in school. Fagin's treasure chest! As that thought entered his head, a haunting cackle echoed through the room.

Before Ali had a chance to look around, he was sprinting back towards the door with the giant iron handle. Slamming the door shut, Ali stood there in silence. What now? Out of nowhere, a trickle of calming water appeared. Following the stream, Ali ended up back at the ladder he had climbed down. It was as if the water was helping him get back to the surface. As he climbed back to the top, he couldn't help but think. If it hadn't rained, if he hadn't fallen down the manhole, if he hadn't found that heavy iron handle, then that street would still be a forgotten piece of history.