

Excerpt from
Archie and the Stoor Worm

by

Eleni Daskalaki

Based on the traditional Orcadian tale
Assipattle and the Stoor Worm

FADE IN

EXT. ORKNEY SCENERY - DAY

Orkney views and landmarks -Skara Brae, Skaill House,
Brough of Birsay, Ring of Brodgar, Old Man of Hoy.

Weather-beaten landscapes, with the sea always near by.

GRANDDAD (V.O)

No one knows for sure where it
came from. They say it has always
lived in the dark depths of the
sea...

EXT. ORKNEY SEASCAPE - DAY

A cloud hides the sun. The sea turns grey. A wave crashes
on the rocks. A storm is approaching.

GRANDDAD (V.O)

But one thing I know for certain:
It's the most horrible of all
creatures that ever lived. It's
called the Stoor Worm.

The name is accompanied by a characteristic, alarming
sound: the STOOR WORM'S HOWL.

The film's TITLE appears.

INT. GRANDDAD'S HOME, FIREPLACE - NIGHT

Cuddled up very close to the fire, ARCHIE, 10, small for
his age, is listening enchanted to GRANDDAD'S story -whose
gentle voice is matched with an equally kind personality.

GRANDDAD

Wherever it went, it brought
destruction and disaster. It
gulped down entire ships and
swept whole cities into the sea.

Illuminated by the flames, Archie's face is glowing with
anticipation. The flare makes the objects in the room look
strangely alive: the monster carved on a chair's leg, the
miniature boat, the collection of seashells in a bowl, the
old lantern, the nets, the rusty anchor, the picture on
the wall of a ship caught in a storm.

GRANDDAD (V.O)

One day the Stoor Worm arrived at
the land where this young boy
lived. His name was Assipattle

(MORE)

GRANDDAD (V.O) (cont'd)
 -it means 'ash-raker'. They
 called him that, because he spent
 his days sitting next to the
 fire, raking the ashes -that's
 all he ever did.

Archie rakes the fire. The mesmerising dance of the
 flames, slowly gives way to a vision:

ANIMATION

A giant sea monster pokes his head out of the water. It's
 the Stoor Worm.

Accompanied, again, by the STOOR WORM'S HOWL.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Actually, it's Archie's drawing of the Stoor Worm. And it
 lives on a page of his notebook.

Archie adds the finishing touches to his drawing, while
 still hearing the echo of his Granddad's voice.

GRANDDAD (V.O)
 Assipattle was the youngest in
 the family. And everyone thought
 he was the laziest, too. His
 older brothers would always tease
 him and fight him and call him
 names.

Archie's notebook is full of drawings, inspired by mythic
 heroes and creatures.

Meantime, the TEACHER explains something to the CLASS.
 Among them a TRIO OF BULLIES: small sharp-witted NIPPY;
 athletic, fun-loving SWORDY, playing with a cardboard
 tube; and quietly confident, burly BURPY.

GRANDDAD (V.O) (cont'd)
 Assipattle never fought back.
 'I'm saving my strength for the
 Stoor Worm', he said. And his
 brothers laughed, and beat him
 some more.

The Teacher asks a question, which several children are
 eager to answer. Most eager of all, cheeky, impatient
 GEMMA, who waves her hand in the air while jumping up and
 down to catch her attention.

GRANDDAD (V.O) (cont'd)
 The land also had a noble king,
 and the king had a kind and
 beautiful daughter. Her name was
 Gem-de-Lovely.

Gemma, realising that Archie is watching her, sticks her tongue out at him.

GRANDDAD (V.O) (cont'd)
 'If someone kills this monster',
 said the king, 'I will happily
 marry him to my daughter'.

The Teacher asks another question, this time looking at Archie. He can see her lips moving. He can see all eyes fixed upon him. And only after several seconds he can actually hear his name.

TEACHER
 ...Archie? Archie??? ARCHIBALD!

Suddenly awakened from his reveries, Archie is confused.

ARCHIE
 I! I will kill the Stoor Worm!

The whole class bursts into laughter. Gemma too. The Bullies mock him.

SWORDY
 (using the tube as a
 loudspeaker)
 Bookworm!

GRANDDAD (V.O)
 'I will kill the Stoor Worm',
 said Assipattle, and his brothers
 laughed. Assipattle said nothing.

The bell rings. The children go outside for their break.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

Most children are physically active. Only Archie sits in a corner reading a BOOK.

Nippy, the Bullies' Boss, spots him first.

NIPPY
 Hey, look! It's the Bookworm!

ALL THREE BULLIES
 (chanting)
 Bookworm! Bookworm!

Archie is alarmed.

The Trio approaches.

Swordy, cardboard tube in hand, starts circling him. Nippy attacks him with witty insults, while Burpy stands guard one step behind her.

From a distance, Gemma is watching.

NIPPY
What's that you got there,
Bookworm? Let me guess... Could
it be a book?!

SWORDY
Bookworm!

NIPPY
You're such a weirdo. Nobody
likes you...

SWORDY
...or your stupid drawings.

NIPPY
Pretty little drawings.

Swordy gets in Nippy's way. She gives him a warning pinch.

NIPPY (cont'd)
Let's have a look, then! C'mon,
let's see! What's so precious
about it?

Archie looks for an escape route. There isn't any.

Eventually, the Trio gets hold of the book.

ARCHIE
Give it back. It's mine.

NIPPY
(mocking)
It's mine. You're such a baby!

SWORDY
Grow up, Bookworm!

They gather around and look through its pages -they think it's hilarious.

NIPPY
Ha ha, look at that!

SWORDY
Oooh, a monster... I'm scared...

Archie makes a move to take his book back. But Swordy is faster -he pulls it away, and passes it on to Burpy.

The book changes hands a few times.

Gemma is standing closer now, watching them carefully.

Swordy is now holding the book. Gemma sneaks behind him and taps him on the left shoulder. When he turns around to his left, she grabs the book out of his right.

She runs over to Archie, hands him his book, and away she runs like a bullet.

The bell rings. Break is over. Children make their way back in.

Swordy gets another pinch from the Boss for blowing it, then the Trio walks away.

The playground is almost deserted.

Archie picks himself up.

GRANDDAD (V.O)
Assipattle said nothing. But
inside he was smiling.