

If Rome Had Magic – Claire Fayers

My novel, *Mirror Magic*, imagines a world exactly like our own but with one big difference – magic exists. Fairy mirrors connect us to the Unworld where the Fair Folk have promised to provide magical goods and services to anyone who asks.

The story starts in 1842, when most mirrors have stopped working and only one small town on the border of Wales and England still has access to the Unworld. *The Wyse Weekly Mirror* (expertly designed by Jess at Macmillan Children’s Books) gives an insight into daily happenings in the last town of magic.

But what of other time periods?

What would newspapers look like if, for example the Romans had magic (and newspapers).

Rome Built in a Day

In celebration of our illustrious Emperor’s birthday, Rome has been rebuilt in a single day. Conjurors across the Empire came together and worked tirelessly, commanding their fairy servants to bring fine marble, gold, and other precious metals from the Unworld. All day long the city echoed with the sound of hammers and the groans of complaining fairies as they hauled blocks of marble into position.

A grand celebration was held in the newly built amphitheatre, including chariot races and trials of combat. As a finale, fiery horses were brought through a mirror from the Unworld to race the Emperor’s own chariot team. The resulting conflagration caused major damage to the arena and several unlucky citizens were eaten by the Unworld horses before the creatures could be caught.

Rome Building Project Proves Disappointing

A week after Rome's dramatic rebuilding, the cracks are beginning to show. It started when the statue of our illustrious Emperor collapsed in the middle of the night. Now, buildings are crumbling. A whole section of the great amphitheatre turned to leaves yesterday afternoon and blew away.

Three conjurors have been arrested and have confessed that fairy magic is mainly made up of illusion. The marble pillars and gold statues may look convincing for a little while, but beneath the façade of enchantment, they are merely mud and leaves.

Rome, it seems, was not built in a day after all.

Roman Roads Conquer Britannia

News from the Ilse of Britannia where our army is fighting a brave battle to subdue the savage inhabitants and bring them into the civilisation of the Empire. Roman conjurors have found a new way to travel across the isle's rough countryside – fairy roads.

We know that fairy enchantments fade when exposed to the real world, but a road only needs to exist long enough for an army to march along it.

Conjurors work at night to create a road. The next day the army marches, claiming all in its path. Some of the island tribes have fought back but many surrender the moment they see the army approaching.

I came. I conjured. I conquered.