

# A TRIUMPH FOR FLAVIUS



CAROLINE DALE  
SNEDEKER

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TO  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS



I.	The Father's Return	1
II.	Dangerous Wounds	22
III.	Flavius Goes to School	29
IV.	Ariphron, the Traveler	41
V.	The Mysterious Valley	47
VI.	The Papyrus House	55
VII.	The Beautiful Chariot	60
VIII.	The Terrible Punishment	69
	Epilogue	83





# THE FATHER'S RETURN

## CHAPTER I

**F**LAVIUS was the happiest boy in Rome. His father was coming home from the wars. There was no doubt about it. Ships with strong oarsmen had brought the word from Greece, chariots drawn by swift horses had carried the news inland, and now heralds with trumpets were crying the message through the streets of the city to the seven hills of Rome.

“Lucius Mummius is coming! He has conquered Greece, he has burnt and destroyed Corinth! He is returning with his mighty army! Romans! Make ready for Lucius Mummius!”

Flavius did not know Corinth, or that it had been a freedom-loving city. He did not understand what a cruel, destroying work was meant by conquering. But he knew that all Rome was proud of his father's victory—so Flavius, the son of Lucius Mummius, was proud, too.





## THE FATHER'S RETURN

Never had he been so excited. He ran from room to room shouting to everyone, "Father is coming!" He ran into the atrium and splashed both hands in the central pool. The water flew and sparkled in every direction.

The atrium was the most important room in the house, so naturally Mummius would be welcomed there. Mother herself was taking charge of the decorations. She had been coming in and out all morning, followed by slaves with arms full of flowers. Now the slaves were hurrying to get out fresh garments for everyone. Lucinda, Secunda and Theodora, the little sisters, were already bathed and dressed standing serenely by the pool. Mischievously, Flavius splashed his hands hard in the water that sparkled in the sunlight slanting through the open roof above it. The little sisters squealed and ran to avoid the shower, while their mother came instantly to reprove Flavius.

"It is all very well to be glad" she said. "But you—a Roman—ought to have some dignity. Look, you have splashed the water quite over to the shrine where the little gods stand. I am ashamed of you!"

But she, too, was excited. Her face was flushed. Beads of perspiration stood on her forehead. She was ordering the slaves this way and that. Some to set the banquet table. Some to go to the market to buy food. Some to deck the whole atrium with flowers.

A few hours later, Lucius Mummius and his immense



## A TRIUMPH FOR FLAVIUS

army arrived outside the walls of Rome. Here he waited while the Senate was meeting to vote whether he should have a Triumph. They decided a unanimous “yes!”

So in the evening, Lucius Mummius with a great company, arrived at his house. Very tanned he was, from the Grecian sun, tired and hot from the journey, but so glad to see everyone that he embraced them all, and greeted the slaves who stood in a crowd in the atrium bowing before him. The house was full of people.

Mother’s eyes beamed.

“Oh, Lucius, you have been gone so long!”

“It’s good to be home,” Father said, and drew himself up with great pride. “The Triumph will be in two days,” he added.

Flavius knew what that meant.

There would be a procession through the streets of Rome ending on the Capitoline Hill. It would be in honor of his father, and he, Flavius, the only son, would march in it. Victorious generals were sometimes given such a Triumph. It was the crowning glory of those who received it.

With the army outside the walls were many, many captives. But Father had brought twelve, who were especially handsome, to the house with him.

“You can have as many more as you wish, Tertia,” he said to his wife. She looked pleased, but did not reply.





## THE FATHER'S RETURN

Turning to Flavius, he touched the shoulder of a slender young man who had come with him.

“Flavius.” he said, “here is my gift to you. Ariphton is the finest slave of the lot. A man offered me seven hundred sesterces for him right on the battle field. But I reserved him for my son. He is descended from kings.”

The strangest look came over the slave's face, as Mummius pushed him forward. Flavius could not tell whether it was fear or hatred. But as the man knelt and bowed before him, Flavius saw that his back and shoulders were trembling.

As Ariphton rose, his eyes met Flavius' eyes, and the look seemed to pierce Flavius so that he was afraid. The eyes were blue like flame. Flavius had never seen really blue eyes before. But his hair was Ionian black.

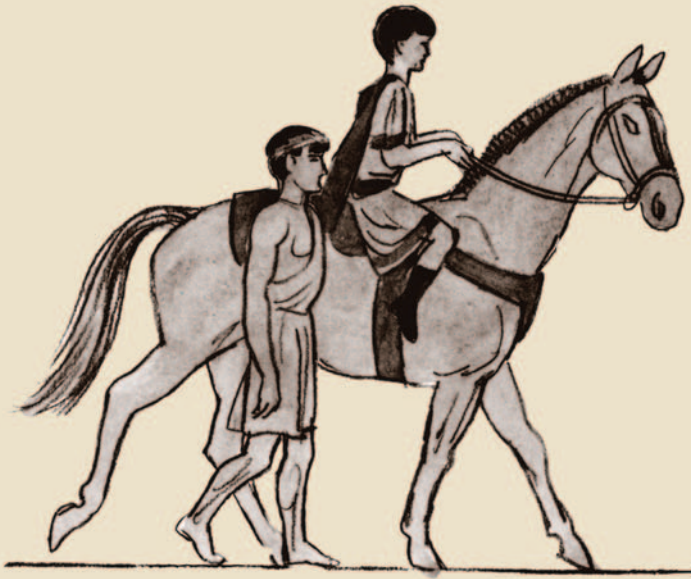
“Ariphton is to be your pedagogue,” Father was saying. “He will wait upon you in every way and take you to school. He will sleep in your room at night.”

“Lucius,” Tertia said in a low voice, “are you sure that it's safe?”

“You need not lower your voice, Tertia,” Mummius answered. “The man knows nothing but Greek. I don't want Flavius to be afraid of a slave!”

“But he looks so resentful—so hostile,” said Mother.

Mummius smiled scornfully. “They all have that look at first—especially Greeks. They soon stop it when they



Ten-year-old Flavius had almost everything a boy could wish for. His parents belonged to the Roman aristocracy, so they lived in a beautiful house almost as luxurious as a palace, on top of Palatine Hill. Flavius went to the finest school where he was treated like a young prince and he had a new personal slave or “pedagogue” to carry his schoolbooks. He also felt his horse was the best in Rome.

Today, the proudest day of his life, young Flavius was riding that fine horse in the Triumph—a procession to honor his father who was returning as a conquering general from the wars in Greece.

Flavius did not know about the destruction that went with conquering or about the harsh treatment slaves could receive. But after his new Greek slave, Ariphron, becomes a friend as well as his pedagogue, Flavius sees the other side of conquering and discovers a new kind of triumph. With 57 pages of illustrations by Cedric Rogers.

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