KAREN McCOMBIE

The Accidental VIKINGS



Illustrated by
Anneli Bray

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Barrington Stoke

For Leila, all the way next door!

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CHAPTER 1

The Viking School Trip

Alfie's year group was on a school trip to the Viking Museum. They'd come to the museum on a coach, and now they stood waiting in a room with walls like big whiteboards. The walls showed stuff about Viking life in Britain.

Someone from the museum was coming to give them a talk soon. Everyone was excited and noisy and chatting with their mates. Even the teachers were chatting!

Alfie walked around and looked at the information and pictures on the walls. His best friend Omar was off sick with the flu, and Alfie had no one to hang out with. But the trip would

still be fun. After the talk, they were all going to travel back in time!

Mr Manzoor, Alfie's teacher, had told them that at the museum there was a sit-on ride where they'd go through a Viking town and see what it was like. There'd be life-size models of people, as well as sounds and smells to make it feel as if it was real.

"Shush!" Mr Manzoor suddenly called out. "Can we say hello to Varg, please?"

Everyone stopped talking and stared. Alfie was short and had to stand on his tiptoes to see the tall Viking man who had stomped into the middle of the room. The Viking had long hair and a beard. He wore a dark green tunic with a leather belt, brown trousers and leather shoes. He also wore a cape made of thick, heavy cloth.

"Hello! I'm Varg!" the man said loudly.

Alfie knew he was just a guy who worked at the museum and Varg wasn't his real name, but he was a very good actor. He really was like a Viking from the past.

"Gather round!" said Varg as he waved his big arms.

Everyone moved closer.



"Are you kids ready to hear about some pretty amazing history?" asked Varg.

"Yes!" they all shouted.

"Nope," said someone who was standing next to Alfie.

Alfie turned and saw Kat Kelly. Kat was in the other class to Alfie, so he didn't know her very well. She mostly hung out with her friend Dilan, who was in the other class too. Kat and Dilan were both tall and acted like they were older and cooler than everyone else.

Alfie couldn't see Dilan. But he **did** see Kat scrolling on her phone.

Varg started his talk. It was brilliant! Varg told them all about the first Vikings to arrive in Britain on their longships.

The best bit of the talk was when Varg told them about a Viking town that was right under

their feet! A few years ago, a new shopping centre was being built. Diggers went in to start the work, but deep in the earth they found the ruins of old houses from Viking times. They even found Viking poo in a hole in the ground that was a toilet!

"Isn't it amazing to think that all this history was hidden for a thousand years?" said Varg.

"Nope," muttered Kat.

Mr Manzoor stormed over.

"Kat, hand over your phone and come and stand beside me!" Mr Manzoor hissed. Then he saw Alfie. "You'd better come too, Alfie," he said. "You can't see anything where you are."

Varg waited as Alfie and Kat followed Mr Manzoor. Everyone turned to look, and Alfie felt his cheeks go pink. Kat didn't care. She rolled her eyes and tossed her long red hair.

“Hey, I was just about to ask for two people to come up and help,” said Varg. He pointed to Alfie and Kat. “You two will be perfect!”

Varg grabbed a box and gave them both some Viking dressing-up things. He told Alfie and Kat to pull them on over their own clothes.

Alfie had a tunic like Varg’s. Kat had a brown dress with dungaree straps. There was a patterned brooch on each strap. Underneath was a sort of shirt, and she also wore a cotton cape that came down to her knees.

“I bet you two didn’t expect to become Vikings today!” Varg said as he rubbed his beard.

Alfie grinned and gave Varg a double thumbs-up.

“Urgh! These shoes are **so** ugly!” Kat moaned. She had put on some flat, pointy Viking boots. “They’re like clown shoes!”



Alfie sighed. It was rubbish being with Kat! She was spoiling everything. Alfie didn't want to be with her a single second more.

The trouble was, Alfie was about to be stuck with Kat for a **lot** longer than that ...