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Opening extract from

Father Thames

Written by

Robin Price

Published by

Mogzilla

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The first book in the *London Deep* series was chosen as a *Recommended Read* for *World Book Day* 2011 and as one of the *Manchester Book Award's* 24 recommended reads for 2010.

'This is a terrifically atmospheric page-turning adventure told through words and comic art... a rattling good read and one in which you are sure to be drawn in to Jem's exploits of survival.' – *Lovereading.co.uk*

'Through pace and narrative power, both admirably sustained, the book avoids becoming didactic. This is no campaign document on climate change... The characterization, especially of Jemima and Nick, is forceful and convincing. They capture the reader's interest and carry the narrative forward...' – *Armadillo Magazine*

'Robin Price's writing is quirky with a bit of an edge to it that greatly adds realism to this dystopian version of London... Add in the gritty illustrated comic panels by Paul McGrory and you find this is indeed something quite new, not only in plot, but in style...with the comic panels adding punctuation to the action occurring within that part of the chapter.' – *Dooyoo.co.uk*

'Is this part graphic novel, part standard text, or is it a story with illustrations...? ... My eleven year old loved it and seemed to have no trouble cutting backwards and forwards between the two...'
– Rachel Ayers Nelson, *School Librarian Magazine*

'London Deep is a really amazing story about a twelve year old girl called Jemima Mallard. She lives in a flooded London of the future!! ... This book is a very enjoyable read with lots of drama action and fun. The comic pics are very enjoyable to look at and they fit well with this kind of story.' – Abigail (aged 10)

FATHER THAMES



MOGZILLA

Father Thames

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www.mogzilla.co.uk/fatherthames

www.paulmcgrory.co.uk

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Recap

Father Thames is set in the near future in a flooded London where rival police forces for kids and grown ups compete to keep the peace.

Jemima Mallard lived on a houseboat with her father, a Chief Inspector in the APD (Adult Police Department). One morning, Jem broke so many laws that even her father's diplomacy couldn't get her out of trouble. Arrested by a YPD (Youth Police Department) officer called Nick, she made a bargain. In exchange for a full pardon, she agreed to help the YPD track down a criminal organisation called *Father Thames,* only to discover that her own mother was one of its leaders! These 'terrorists' were drilling for gas under the river Thames. When Jem and her mother met, sparks flew and her mother's friend, nicknamed 'The Fatman', paid the price.



Jem refused her mum's invitation to join Father Thames, and decided to join the YPD instead. This is what happened next....

Assembly

THE YPD'S SUPREME MANDER ADDRESSED HIS NEW RECRUITS.





'Down with the 'Dults!' came the cry. The chant was sucked up to the rafters and it bounced back off the ceiling to the ranks below. The rivalry between the police forces for kids and grown-ups was legendary. Most of the recruits took up the old feud with vigor, but not every YPD officer ran with the pack.

Jemima Mallard sniggered uncontrollably.

'Check out the Mander in his new hat. It's REALLY pointy!'

'I could look at him all day. He's kind of cute,' giggled her friend Celine.

'I suppose he is,' replied Jem. 'If you're into authoritarians.'

'They should've let me design the uniforms,' said Celine. 'I was going to be a clothes designer like my dad, before I joined up.'

Jem practically exploded with laughter.

'The Young Fashion Police! Brownshirts are the new black! And this season, riot truncheons are long...'

'Sshhhhh!' snorted the tall recruit to their left.

'For Lud's sake! Show some respect!' came a call from behind.

One of the Wave Commanders would normally have pulled them out of line for talking in the ranks and put them on a charge. Luckily for Jemima, there wasn't room in the hall to wave a charge sheet. Besides, after months of lectures, practicals and on-water training, high spirits were to be expected.

It was traditional for the Mander to address the recruits each year at graduation, and every time there was a new theme. The YPD loved its slogans, and the adult police weren't much better. Jem wondered what the Thames's hardened criminals would think if they knew they were being busted as part of the 'Scupper Crime' initiative or 'Operation Seaslug' or whatever bizarre name they'd come up. Poor Jem! She was doing her best, but she often wondered if she had the right personality for Youth Police work.

The Mander raised his baton and called for silence.

Haig, the Head of Psyc Ops, stood next to the Mander,

peering out at the crowd. Jem wasn't the only one with the feeling that behind his regulation sunglasses, Haig's eyes were on her.



Young people matter

Young people mattered to Jemima Mallard all right. Before she'd even finished her training at Hendon Marsh, she'd started hunting down her mother's little helpers.

Jem was furious that her mum had walked out on her seven long years ago. 'Rage' didn't really get close to describing how she felt. It was so bad that she'd have arrested her own mother if it were legal – which of course it wasn't. Her mum was over the age limit. So Jem had made it her business to track down every young member of her mum's terrorist group – Father Thames. Maybe 'terrorists' wasn't the right word for them. Apart from a little illegal gas prospecting, the most criminal thing about them was their taste in boiler suits and the way they went through electricity like water. Hadn't they ever heard of the Climate Upgrade?

That evening, after the rally, it was back to the usual routine.

