



The Flesh Eater; The Midwinter Watch

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The cover of **The Flesh Eater** promises that the story will 'make your flesh crawl' and while it is a page-turner, the book is gruesome and plain nasty in the way that it both describes and dwells on physically sickening detail. The ancient, flesh-eating Mary-Lou is brought back to life by the evil Guy March and his partner in the apparently genteel and peaceful surrounding of a present day East Anglian town. There are readers hooked on horror, who will have their taste satisfied but it is sensibility-blunting inhuman stuff, cheaply used for entertainment.

In **The Midwinter Watch** everything is snow-bound and so the arrival of the train is astonishing to Sophie, Jack and Simon, even more so because the line no longer exists. A stranger alights from the train, with a hazy notion of the present, including the dispensing of a ten-shilling note to Simon. The mystery is underway. The stranger has stolen a watch which connects present to past and is determined to get hold of the even more powerful watch of the title and so find a fortune in gold stolen almost a hundred year ago. The three children have to stop him. That opening and the final scenes, with past and present fusing as Sophie hurtles along the missing railway line and into the snow, are especially good in an exciting and satisfyingly well-told story.

Running Order:

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