

LOONEY BAY ALL STARS

HELAINÉ BECKER
ILLUSTRATED BY SAMPAR



The Emperor Strikes Out



SCHOLASTIC

LOONEY TUNES
ALL STARS

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LOONEY TUNES ALL-STAR


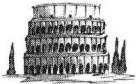






The Emperor Strikes Out

Helaine Becker

**Illustrated by
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Chapter 1

“Construction on the Roman Colosseum began in 72 A.D. The building was 48 metres high. The floor was sand. In fact, the word ‘arena’ actually means ‘sand’ . . .” Reese’s teacher, Mr. Norman, droned from the front of the class.

Reese stared out the window. He tried to pay attention, he really did, but all he could think about was his

mysterious, magical coin. The coin that seemed to bring people from other times to Looney Bay. The one that had somehow wound up in the soccer bag of Seamus “Snotty” Snodgrass, Reese’s arch-enemy from Trinity Bay Prep School.

I have to get that coin back! Reese seethed. *Who knows what might happen if Seamus figures out what the coin can do?*

“Mr. McSkittles,” scolded Mr. Norman, snapping Reese back to attention. “Can you tell us which emperor built the Roman Colosseum?”

“Um . . . the Emperor Penguin?” Reese offered.

The class broke into peals of laughter.

“Very amusing,” said Mr. Norman



sourly. "I hope you'll find detention just as funny."

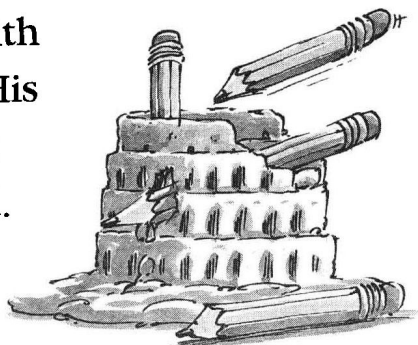
Reese sighed. It was going to be another one of those days.

There had been a lot of "those days" ever since Reese had found the coin under a bench at the Looney Bay hockey arena.

First he'd been kidnapped by pirates and held captive aboard their ship. He had barely managed to survive that scrape. Then, medieval knights had shown up and Reese had found himself in the middle of their duel to the death! Next came the Vikings and the Skraelings, and after that, a famished fifteenth-century explorer named John Cabot. Reese's whole life had been turned upside down since he'd discovered the

coin. He wished he could get rid of it — but not by handing it over to Seamus!

“What’s bothering you?” Reese’s friend Darren asked later that day. They were the last two kids to leave the school. Darren had also gotten detention — during art class he had built a model Colosseum out of clay and then bombarded it with pencil “spears.” His teacher had not been impressed. “You’re not still thinking about that coin, are you?”



Reese nodded.

“I say good riddance,” said Darren. He followed Reese across the vacant lot behind the schoolyard. “It’s not your

problem anymore, so forget about it!”

“I wish I could!” Reese said. “But I feel responsible. I mean, it was my coin in the first place. And now if anything bad happens . . . ”

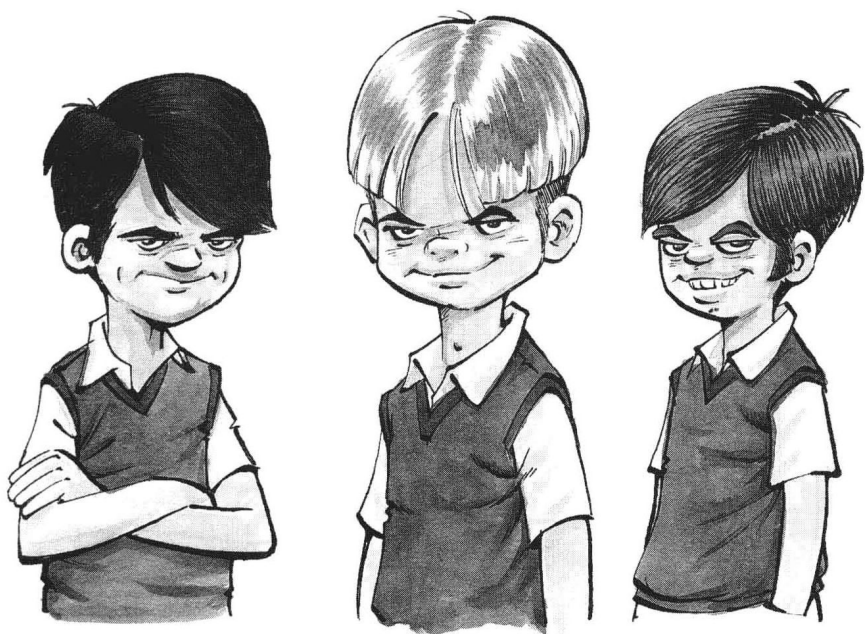
“It won’t be your fault,” insisted Darren. “It will be —”

“His.” Reese suddenly pointed and glared. Seamus was ahead of them, climbing the path up to Ebbert’s Field.

Darren gulped. “Uh-oh,” he said. He grabbed Reese’s arm. “Don’t do anything dumb!” he urged.

Reese shrugged him off. “Seamus! Wait up!” he called out.

A look of surprise crossed Seamus’s face, but it was almost immediately replaced with a sneer. Seamus’s bully-boy sidekicks, Jack Patrick and Roman Quaig,



appeared at his side. They folded their arms and sneered too.

“What’s the matter, Reesy, lost your pieces?” mocked Seamus.

“Reese’s Pieces!” Jack guffawed.
“That’s a good one.”

Reese ignored the jibe. “It’s about that coin you found in your soccer bag.”

Seamus rolled his eyes. “Not *that*

again. You expect me to hand it over just because you say it's yours? No way! That coin looks really ancient. I bet it's worth a fortune. I'm going to get my dad to have it appraised."

"But Seamus," Reese said, "It *is* my coin. And it's special . . ."

"I'll say," said Seamus. "It's awesome. Look at how it sparkles." He dug the coin from his pocket and held it up to the sun. It glinted like a cat's eye. "I bet you wish you had a coin just like this," he taunted.

Seamus's words were just a roar in Reese's ears. Reese was captivated by the coin. He couldn't take his eyes off it.

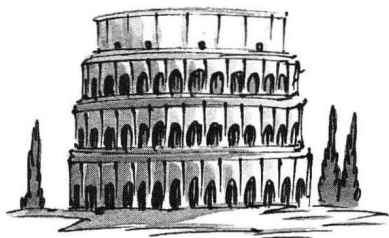
He had to get it back!

Reese snatched the coin from Seamus's hand. He took off as fast as

he could, running as if his life depended on it.

“Stop him!” yelled Seamus to his cronies. “He’s got my coin!”





Chapter 2

Reese could hear the two boys thundering behind him. He felt rough hands grip his shirt. Then he was on the ground, his face in the dirt.

Seamus strolled over, not a hair out of place. He put his foot on the small of Reese's back.

"Give it back," Seamus said.

Reese struggled to get free.

"I said give it back," Seamus repeated,

pressing his foot harder into Reese's spine.

Darren rushed up. "Let him go!" He said, trying to yank Seamus away from Reese. "We're supposed to be civilized Canadians, not a bunch of bloodthirsty gladiators. Why don't you creepos start acting like it?"



“Who’s gonna make us?” said Seamus. “There’s three of us. And only two of you.”

“Nice sportsmanlike conduct from the Captain of the Trinity Bay Marauders softball team,” said Darren, shaking his head. “I’m sure your coach would like to hear about how you beat us up in an unfair fight.”

Jack and Roman exchanged uneasy glances. A report like that could get the boys kicked off their team for good!

Seamus let Reese go. Reese rolled over, then got to his feet, thrust out his jaw and stood nose to nose with his enemy. He gripped the coin hard in his hand.

“I’ll challenge you for the coin, Seamus, but not in a free-for-all like this,” Reese said.