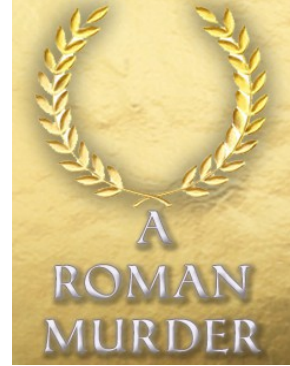


The Suspects



Lucilla

Sister to Commodus and daughter to Faustina and Marcus Aurelius, Lucilla has spent most of her life learning from her father, and watching his strategy, both in battle and as a ruler. As such, she is fair and just, and considers the good of the people above all else. Naturally, she has an open communication with a number of members of the Senate, and they respect her. Her only hope of power, though, is in an advisory role, as her father will most certainly name her brother, Commodus, his successor. Lucilla is poised and strong, and relentless when she believes she is working for the good of the empire. Lucilla is responsible for the party this evening, as she requested a "demonstration battle" between her favourite male gladiator, Thracius Gallus, and the most skilled gladiatrix, Caecilia, as entertainment during her birthday celebration.

Faustina

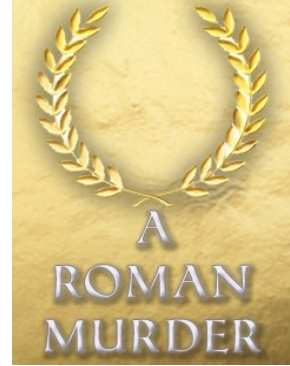
Empress of Rome, wife of Marcus Aurelius and mother of Lucilla and Commodus, Faustina is a strong female leader, and quite involved in her husband's joined running of the empire - so much so that she is known as "Mother of the Camp" by the soldiers, as she frequently accompanies her husband on military campaigns. Faustina is gracious and poised, and rarely lets anything alter her composure.

Caecilia

Caecilia is a gladiatrix, or a female gladiator. While not as common as their male counterparts, female gladiators are used in the Roman Empire and Caecilia in particular has caught the eye of Lucilla, the daughter of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Lucilla admires Caecilia's strength and skill as a female in the arena, and has asked to have her attend the celebration this evening to put on a "demonstration battle" against another crowd favourite, Thracius Gallus. Caecilia is quiet and soft-spoken, despite her brazen ferocity in the arena, and she has been known to defeat both men and beasts with the same mercilessness.



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Prisca

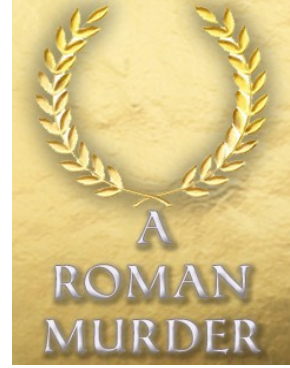
Prisca is a servant of Decima Clovius, his wife and his daughter, the victim, Drusa Clovius. She was selected, of all the servants, to travel with the family to Rome to meet with Marcus Aurelius to arrange the marriage of Drusa to Marcus Aurelius' son, Commodus. A young servant the same age as Drusa herself, Prisca has never left the Clovius' villa, and was excited to journey so far and stay with the emperor. Despite her excitement, Prisca keeps her feelings in check and serves with humility and an understated demeanour.

Marcia

Marcia is a handmaiden in the Imperial Palace. She came to be a servant here after serving Marcus Aurelius' adopted brother and co-ruler, Lucius Verus. While she serves the entire house, she tends specifically to Lucilla and Commodus. Marcia is privy to a lot of information, and to all reports is loyal and discreet. Marcia is humble and obedient in front of her masters, but in private, with the other servants, she is outspoken, and has, on more than one occasion, has been warned by the others to watch her tongue and be mindful of her place, regardless of where her daily duties may take her.

Florus Clovius

Mother of the victim, Drusa, Florus is visiting Rome with her husband and their servant, Prisca, for the sole purpose of finalizing an arrangement of marriage between her daughter and Marcus Aurelius' son, Commodus. Florus' husband, Decima Clovius, owns a large amount of land – land that Marcus Aurelius would like to use to expand the Roman Empire. Because of this, a deal was struck between the two, and Florus and Decima have included a large amount of land in Drusa's dowry. Florus is a severe woman – serious and proper, and seems leery of her new allies in Rome.



Aneksi

An Egyptian musician, Aneksi has been brought in to play at the birthday celebration of Lucilla. Aneksi's percussion skills are unparalleled, and her use of the sistrum is reputed empire-wide. Because of this, Lucilla requested Aneksi and her fellow musicians be brought to Rome for her celebration, and tonight they have not disappointed. Aneksi is quiet and mysterious, and has a type of allure about her that draws people into the sounds she creates with her instruments.

Quintana

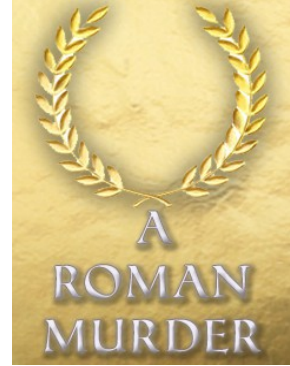
Friend and confidant of the Emperor's daughter, Lucilla, Quintana has an official role in Rome, and lives with the family in her own private quarters. Quintana and Lucilla have been friends since they were young girls, and the two trust one another implicitly. Having such a relationship with Lucilla, Quintana knows a lot of what goes on during the day-to-day running of the empire, however as she is considered family, she also has the trust of Marcus Aurelius to be discrete. Quintana is fiercely devoted to Marcus Aurelius, Lucilla and Faustina, but she and Commodus dislike one another, and have for years.

Sadiki

An Egyptian musician at the festivities tonight, Sadiki and her band have been brought in to play at the birthday celebration of Lucilla. Sadiki plays the lyre, and along with the rest of the band including Aneksi, Sadiki is entertaining Rome's elite at the Imperial Palace. Because Lucilla requested Aneksi to play for her birthday celebration, Sadiki has had the opportunity to attend the celebration and visit Rome – something no one else in her family has ever been able to do. Sadiki is lively as she plays, but when spoken to is quiet and respectful, taking her cues from Aneksi as to how she should act while in the presence of the Emperor of Rome.



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Marcus Aurelius

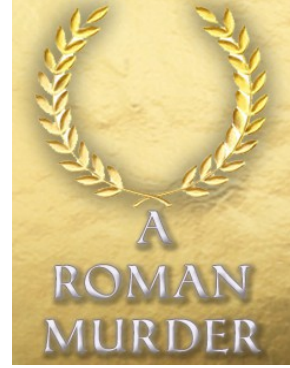
Emperor of Rome, Marcus Aurelius is actually a co-ruler, sharing the duties with another man named Lucius Verus, however it is Marcus Aurelius who is revered by the troops, and his reputation spans the vast expanse of the Roman Empire. Father of Commodus and Lucilla and husband of Faustina, Marcus Aurelius is stern and serious, but fiercely devoted to his family, and the Roman Empire as a whole. He is a natural philosopher and is very wise, both in military strategy as well as the politics of running an empire as vast as Rome.

Commodus

Son of Faustina the Empress and Emperor Marcus Aurelius, Commodus is their only surviving male son, and therefore is being groomed by his father to one day become emperor himself. While his sister, Lucilla, has more political acumen than Commodus and Commodus shows more interest in a life of luxury and pleasure over reigning, Marcus Aurelius has taken him on campaigns in the hopes of grooming him for greatness. In spite of his distinguished lineage, Commodus is selfish and unruly, but carries himself with such assurance that many hold out hope that he can yet become the one Roman who can follow the great Marcus Aurelius.

Thracius Gallus

A scribe-turned soldier for an enemy army, Thracius Gallus was sold into slavery after being captured by the Romans. Since, he has embraced his life as a gladiator, and has become a crowd favourite in The Colosseum. The people chant his name and shower him with rose petals as he emerges into the arena. Because of his success, Thracius Gallus has earned an honoured place as someone who is invited to privately entertain the emperor and his family at private events. Tonight, he was invited to battle Caecilia, a gladiatrix and another honoured invitee, and the two of them were to put on a "demonstration" battle as entertainment for Lucilla's birthday celebration.



Decima Clovius

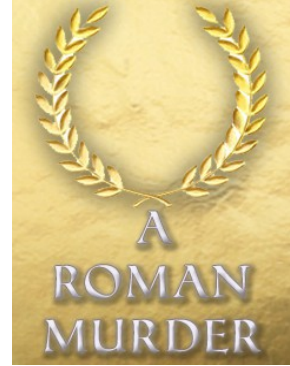
Father of the victim, Drusa Clovius, Decima has traveled to Rome with his family to meet with Marcus Aurelius and make the arrangements for and give his daughter to the Emperor, to marry his son, Commodus, in a few weeks time. As her dowry, Decima has offered a large amount of land – land he knows that Marcus Aurelius wishes to rule. Because of this, the agreement between Decima and the Emperor has been mutually beneficial, and Decima Clovius was happy to have one of his daughters positioned to be Empress. Decima is stately and bold, and has little patience for trickery or deceit, and the discovery of the murder of his daughter has thrown him into a rage.

Narcissus

Fighter and wrestler Narcissus is a new addition to Marcus Aurelius' inner circle. A champion fighter, Narcissus has won the trust of Aurelius, and has been charged with the duty of training many of Marcus Aurelius' soldiers. It's no secret that Aurelius hopes that Narcissus will personally train the unskilled Commodus in the art of battle and – if Narcissus can win the admiration of Commodus as he has his emperor father, perhaps he will be even more involved in the running of the empire under Commodus' rule. Narcissus is intimidating to stand before, as he holds himself as though he is constantly ready for battle, regardless of the person with whom he speaks.

Cassius Dio

A writer and historian, Cassius Dio is an up-and-comer in Roman politics. Greek by birth, Cassius Dio has chosen Rome, and has decided to dedicate his life to documenting the history of the Roman Empire. While he claims to be unbiased, his disdain for the expansion of the empire on such a grand scale does creep into his writings. Regardless, he is an ally of Marcus Aurelius, and some have even speculated that he could become a senator in the future.



Antonius

Servant to Decima Clovius, Antonius has travelled with Decima, Florus and their daughter, the victim, Drusa Clovius, to Rome. Antonius serves Clovius dutifully, and is, above all, dedicated to his masters. Despite his servant status, Antonius seems to share a kinship with Decima, and the two are often seen speaking in hushed tones. Antonius is obedient, but has an air of confidence about him not usually seen in servants, especially ones who find themselves in the presence of the Emperor of Rome for the first time!

Lucius Verus

Adoptive brother to Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus is the co-ruler of the Roman Empire. Their partnership in ruling is a first in the empire, however it has been so successful that it will most certainly not be the last! When Marcus Aurelius' rule was confirmed by the Senate, Aurelius refused to take power unless the Senate granted equal power to Verus. Very well-spoken and intelligent, Lucius Verus holds slightly less power in the Empire than Marcus Aurelius, but the two work very well together, and Marcus Aurelius respects him – so much so that he has also arranged a marriage between Verus and his daughter, Lucilla.

Horatio Cispus

A Senator for Rome, Horatio is an impartial member of the senate, although his votes tend to side against the great Marcus Aurelius. Horatio is one of the more stoic members of the senate, and keeps his temper regardless of the issue at hand. While his counterparts yell in session and finger-point, Horatio tries to see both sides of each issue, and always votes his conscience. Because of this and not his political views, Horatio has earned the respect of Marcus Aurelius and his opinion is valued and often sought by the Emperor.