

Mary Anning

When Mary was young, her father took her down to the cliffs. There was something hidden inside the rock!

"It... it's TREASURE!" she gasped.

"It's what we call a Curiosity," smiled her father.

The Curiosity was the most beautiful thing Mary had ever seen.

"The cliffs are full of treasure," she whispered. She found them everywhere.

One evening, some **affluent** ladies came to visit her father. One of the ladies wanted Mary's father to build her a cabinet. Mary nervously showed the Philpot sisters her collection.

"Oh!" gasped the ladies. "What wonderful fossils!" Mary had never heard the word. Annie Philpot showed Mary a **colossal** tooth she had found and she believed the rest of the creature was still out there, hidden in the cliffs.

Sadly, Mary's father fell ill and died. Mary and her mother needed money and she was able to sell the Curiosities to holiday-makers.

On the cliffs, Mary found a little dog, who followed her home- they were **inseparable**. Unfortunately, one morning Mary didn't notice that her dog had wandered away. At last, she heard a faint barking and, looking up, she saw her dog furiously scratching at something in the clay. The little dog had found the sea monster! As the evening sun melted into the sea, the skeleton was laid out for all the world to see.

For months afterwards, visitors came to meet Mary - 'The Fossil Girl of Lyme Regis'. They called the monster Ichthyosaurus - 'the fish lizard'. The museum that bought it paid enough money for Mary and her mother to live happily for the rest of their lives.