



PAPER PLANES

Avancé

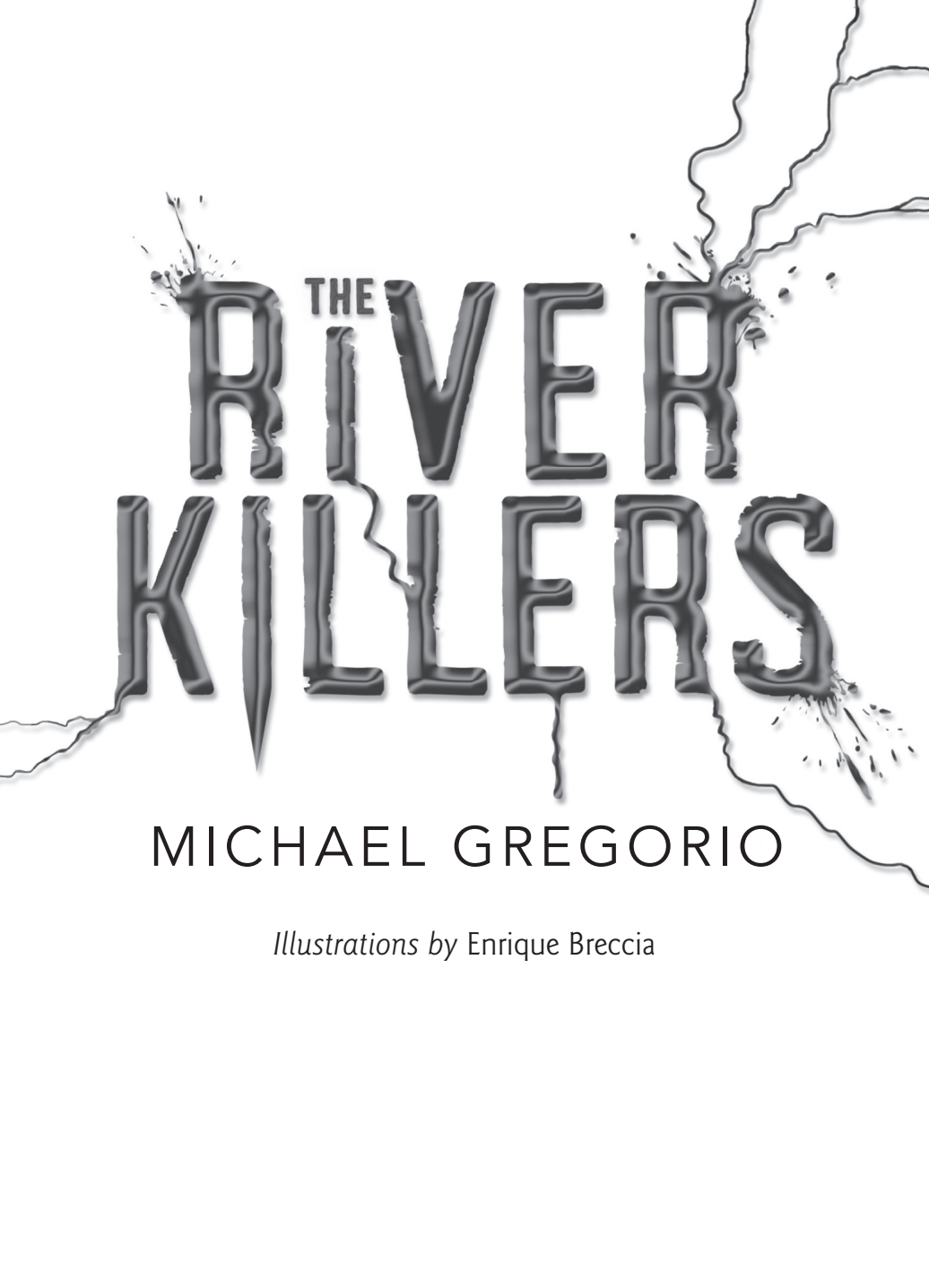
THE RIVER KILLERS

MICHAEL
GREGORIO

didier



 Version audio
GRATUITE

The title 'THE RIVER KILLERS' is rendered in a large, bold, metallic font with a 3D effect. The letters are dark grey with highlights and shadows, giving them a heavy, industrial appearance. The word 'THE' is smaller and positioned above 'RIVER'. The letters are set against a background that features a faint, black outline map of South America. The map is partially obscured by the title and has a distressed, ink-splattered texture. The overall aesthetic is gritty and dramatic.

THE RIVER KILLERS

MICHAEL GREGORIO

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*Une collection imaginée avec humour,
enthousiasme et provocation par Rupert Morgan*

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enfin



Intermédiaire

A2→B1

- Macbeth and the Creature from Hell, *Roger Morris*
- Romeo and Juliet in Las Vegas, *Rupert Morgan*
- Login: Dracula, *Peter Flynn*
- Bubonic Britain, *Philippa Boston*
- Deadly Jobs, *Philippa Boston*
- Blitz Britain, *Philippa Boston*
- Killer Sports, *Philippa Boston*



Avancé

B1→B2

- Frankenstein 2.0, *Roger Morris*
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- Rebel Songs, *Rupert Morgan*
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- After The Sea Rose, *M. F. W. Curran*



Expert

B2→C1

- The Blackout, *Rupert Morgan*
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- The Guilty Innocent, *Philippa Boston*

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1

“Mother is sick,” Kārā says.

It is evening. We are sitting together on the river bank, watching the water.

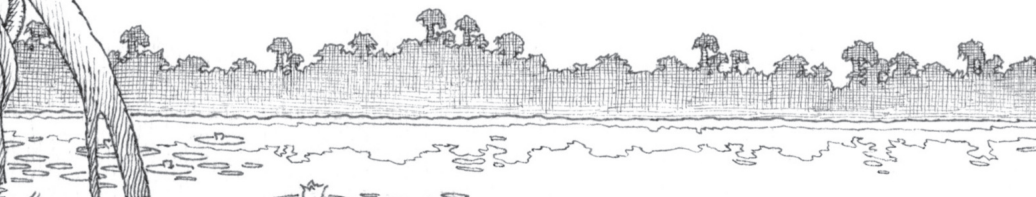
“She’s sinking lower* every minute.”

A strange idea comes to me, but I hesitate before I say it. “I... I think she is dying.”

“Mother cannot die!” Kārā says, and he sounds angry. He always sounds angry when something frightens him.

But I am right.

* She’s sinking lower: *son niveau baisse*



The next morning, we are no longer alone beside the river.

Everyone is there. All the men, women and children.

And everyone is silent.

Silent, and afraid.

Suddenly, Akā turns to walk away and all the men follow him. They sit in a circle in the centre of the village, waiting for the Leopard to speak.

A girl cannot sit down with the men, so I sit in the shade of one of the huts. I can hear every word that they say. Wood-smoke hangs in the air like a perfumed mist*, but there is a smell of death which the wood-smoke cannot hide.

“This is our home,” says Akā solemnly. “The forest gives us fruit and meat. Mother gives us water to drink. She welcomes our women when they wash our food. We fish and we swim in her waters. There’ll be no more fishing, no swimming now. And no water to drink.”

Akā is the oldest man in the village, the wisest, too. He is the father of us all. Akā, the Leopard, a man among men. He provides for his wives and his children.

“Mother has left us,” the Leopard says.

The children had laughed as the fish jumped high in

* **mist:** *la brume*

the air, trapped inside pools that grew smaller and smaller. But no-one is laughing now. The fish lie trapped in the mud¹, their bright colours – gold and silver, red and blue – becoming a dull black. And when they stop moving, a stench² begins to fill the air.

Akã reaches for his pipe, calls for a stick from the nearest fire, waits as Kãrã brings the flame and holds it up for him. Akã draws deeply three or four times on his long wooden pipe, then he hands the pipe to Kãrã, the Fish, inviting his favourite son to sit down beside him and smoke.

Akã takes a deep breath, then he raises his eyes to the sky. “Mother has abandoned us. She won’t be coming back,” he says finally. “There is no coming back from the Silent World Beyond the Forest.”

The women standing outside the circle begin to cry, then the children, too.

Akã takes the pipe from Kãrã’s hands. He smokes in silence, never taking his eyes off the sacred stream. Then, suddenly, he claps his hands. “Go and play,” he calls to the children.

When they are gone, he turns to his sons and calls for his daughters.

1. **the mud:** *la boue*

2. **a stench:** *une odeur nauséabonde*

I step out from beside the hut, and take my place in the circle.

“What did you smell before the fish died?” Ākā asks.