

Let's read Chapter 14 and see what is happening to Raven Boy and Elf Girl!

'Aren't you lonely?'

'Not at all! I like it here. Nobody bothers me. Usually,' he added, staring at the pair of them.

'We don't want to intrude,' said Elf Girl. 'We'd be very happy to leave. We have to! We're on an important quest, you see.'

'Really?' asked Mervin, taking another sip of tea. His eyes narrowed slightly.

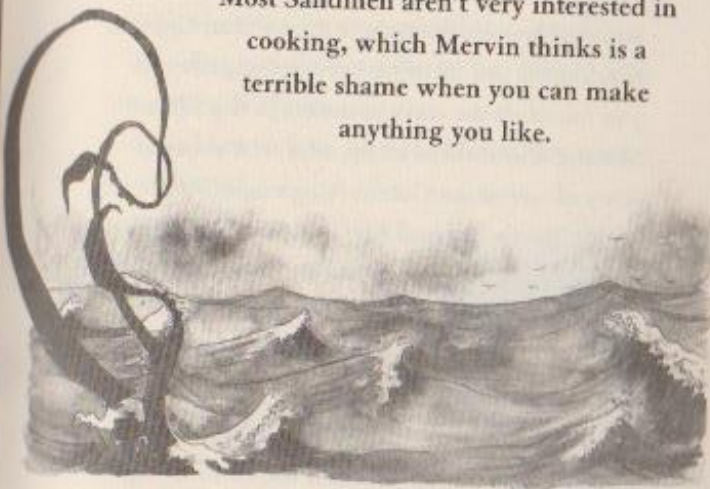
'Yes, we're going to save the world from the Goblin King!'

Mervin spluttered and sprayed tea all over Raven Boy and Elf Girl.



FOURTEEN

Most Sandmen aren't very interested in cooking, which Mervin thinks is a terrible shame when you can make anything you like.



'The Goblin King?' said Mervin again. 'You're going to fight the Goblin King?'

'Yes,' said Raven Boy. 'Have you heard of him?'

Mervin the Sandman rolled his eyes.

'You're mad!' he said. 'It was nice meeting you. I expect you'll be dead very soon so it's probably not worth me making you any more food.'

'Dead?' wailed Elf Girl.

'Don't you know how deadly the Goblin King is? Just his little toe is scarier than Captain Blackblood and all of his crew put together. If you found all the scary monsters in the Scream Sea and added them all up, they'd be about as scary as one of the Goblin King's nostrils!'

Raven Boy and Elf Girl looked each other.

'We've heard he's bad . . . ' began Elf Girl.

'Bad! *Bad?*' cried Mervin. 'Ha!'

Then he tapped the side of his head with one long forefinger.

'You're nuts!'

'But we have to!' cried Raven Boy. 'We have to save the world. He's trying to destroy our forest. He sent an ogre to pull up all the trees. We defeated him!'

Mervin stopped tapping his head.

'You did?'

He looked quite impressed.

'Yes, and we climbed the Monster Mountains. Only now we're stuck.'

'Yes, you are. On the edge of Scream Sea.'

Raven Boy and Elf Girl looked very sad.

'Maybe you're right,' said Raven Boy.

'Maybe we should give up and go home. If we could! How can we even get off this island?'

Rat squeaked and Raven Boy picked him up and stroked him.

'I know, Rat,' he said. 'I know you want to go home.'

'But we can't!' cried Elf Girl. 'We've come so far and anyway, we know how to defeat the Goblin King!'

'You do?' asked Mervin.

'Sort of,' Elf Girl said.

'Raven Boy found out that in order to defeat him, we need something called the Singing Sword, and something called the Tears of the Moon.'

'Only we don't know what they are,' said Raven Boy.

'The Singing Sword is



a sword,' said Mervin. 'That sings. It's pretty obvious really.'

'Well, we didn't know,' said Raven Boy, grumpily. 'What about the Tears of the Moon?'

'I . . . er . . . ' said Mervin. 'I don't know. But I do know where to find them.'

'You do?' asked Elf Girl.

'Yes,' said Mervin. 'You see, whenever the pirates come and bury their treasure here, I make myself invisible and listen to their stories, and hear what they're talking about and so on.'

'And you've heard about the Sword, and the Tears?'

'Oh yes,' said Mervin. 'Many times. You see, of all the treasures the pirates get, none of them are as precious as the Singing Sword, or the Tears of the Moon. That's what they say. Only they're too scared to go and find them.'

'Captain Blackblood is too scared?' asked Raven Boy, his eyes wide with fear.

Mervin nodded slowly.

'Yes, you see, to get the Singing Sword, and the Tears of the Moon, you would have to go to the very middle of the Dread Desert.'

'The Dread Desert?'

'Do you have to repeat everything I say?' asked Mervin.

'Sorry,' said Raven Boy.

'Anyway, yes, the Dread Desert. Full of spooky spirits and strange happenings. It's huge. Vast. There's nothing to drink, and it's as hot as the sun. No one's ever come back alive!'

Elf Girl gulped.

'How do you know all this, anyway?' she asked.

'It's where I come from,' Mervin explained. 'Where us sandpeople live. The Dread Desert.'

'Eep,' said Raven Boy. Then he stood up. 'We have to try. We have to try anyway. We can't just let the Goblin King take over the world. Destroy the forests, and turn the people into slaves. No!'

'But Raven Boy,' asked Elf Girl, 'how are we going to get off this island?'

Mervin stood up.

'If you're determined to go,' he said, 'I can help you.'



Raven Boy and Elf Girl sat up straight. 'Yes, all we have to do is wait until next time Captain Blackblood and his crew arrive to dig up some treasure. After they've done that they usually head east over Scream Sea and go and spend all their money in a port on the mainland. A port called Waterspout.'

'So how does that help us?' asked Raven Boy. 'You've already told us he's the most fearsome pirate on the sea. We can't exactly ask him for a ride, can we?'

'No,' agreed Mervin. 'Nor can you just stow away on his ship, because if he found you, which he certainly would, he would barbecue you before the day was out.'

'EEP,' said Raven Boy again.

'Stop saying that,' said Elf Girl. She looked hard at Mervin. 'So what's your plan?'

'My plan,' said Mervin, 'is quite simply to make you both invisible. Then next time Blackblood and his crew show up, all you need to do is swim over to the ship, find somewhere out of the way to hide, and wait till you get to Waterspout.'

'That could work!' cried Raven Boy.

'And you could make Rat invisible too?' asked Elf Girl.

'Yes, of course. And even better than that,' Mervin went on, 'I can make some food for your journey, and make that invisible too. I have to say it makes eating a little messy, but

you'll get the hang of it.'

'Hooray!' cried Raven Boy.

Elf Girl didn't look so certain, but she smiled anyway.

'There's just one thing,' said Mervin, very seriously.

'Which is?' asked Elf Girl.

'Which is this. You have to be very careful not to sneeze. If you do . . .'

Elf Girl closed her eyes.

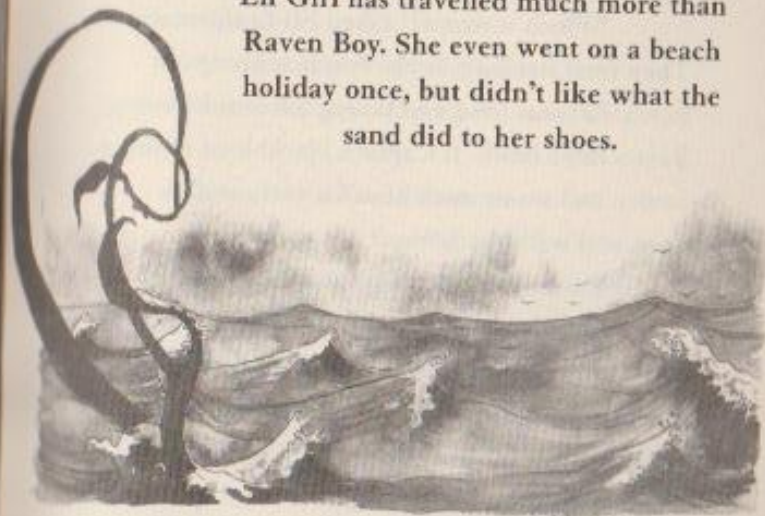
Raven Boy gulped again.

'Oh, nuts,' he said, 'I'd forgotten that.'

'But come on, how often do you sneeze?' asked Mervin brightly. 'Really? I'm sure you'll be fine. Just stay away from the ship's pepperpots, eh?'

FIFTEEN

Elf Girl has travelled much more than Raven Boy. She even went on a beach holiday once, but didn't like what the sand did to her shoes.



Raven Boy and Elf Girl were sick of waiting for Captain Blackblood to arrive. It was awful.

They knew they needed him to come so they could get off the island, but the longer they waited, the more scared they got.

With every day that passed, Mervin would make them food, and they would spend their days staring at the red waves of Scream Sea or, in Raven Boy's case, climbing the trees

Chapter 14

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary

Infer

Predict

Explain

Retrieve

Summarise



V What does the word 'vast' mean?

I Why do you think Mervin says, 'Just stay away from the ship's pepper pots.'

P What do you think will happen next?

E Find phrases to show that Mervin thinks fighting the Goblin King is not a good idea.

R Why does Mervin think it is not worth feeding Elf Girl and Raven Boy anymore?

S Summarise this chapter in 3 points.

VOCABULARY LABORATORY

Explain meaning / Definition:

Use in a sentence (add picture too):

Modifications:

Modify to past tense, present, plural singular, add prefix or suffix etc.
How many forms can you think of?

precious

Word Class:

Word Class:

Synonyms

Antonyms

@VocabularyNinja

'Words unlock the doors to a world of understanding...'



The word I
want you to
investigate is
precious