

Let's read Chapter 15 and see what is happening to Raven Boy and Elf Girl!

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.

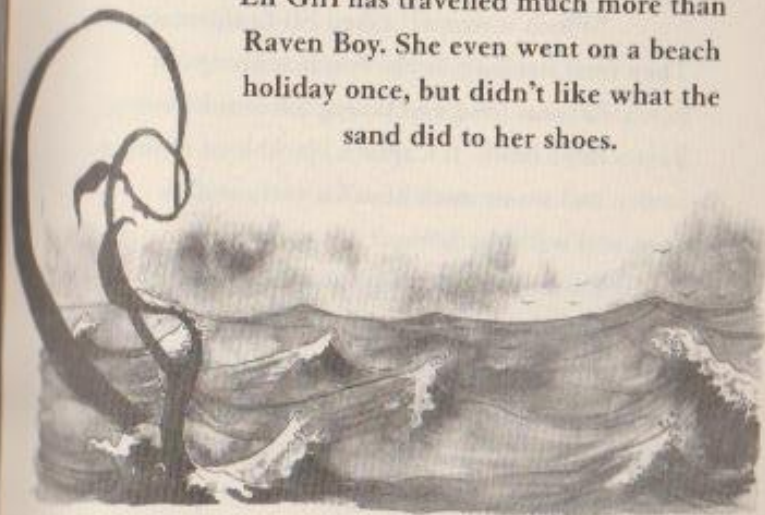
Raven Boy gulped again.

'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

in the jungle, just to check he hadn't forgotten how to.

'Which is worse?' asked Elf Girl one day. They were strolling on the beach, looking out to sea. Rat was tired and taking a free ride on Raven Boy's head. 'If Captain Blackblood never comes, and we're stuck here for ever, or if he does, and we have to sneak onto his ship?'

Raven Boy put his head on one side.

'That's a tough question,' he said. 'The more I hear about Blackblood from Mervin, the worse he sounds! But we have to get off this island to save the world from the Goblin King.'

Elf Girl nodded.

'And anyway,' she said, 'it's good practice.'

'What is?' asked Raven Boy.

'Facing scarier and scarier enemies. That way, when we finally get to the Goblin King, he won't seem so bad.'

'I hope you're right about that.'

'Of course I am. I'm always right.'

'Usually,' said Raven Boy, laughing.

'What?' said Elf Girl.

Rat squeaked.

'Don't worry,' said Raven Boy. 'We're just joking. We're not actually going to have another fight.'

'Aren't we?' asked Elf Girl, but Rat ignored them and squeaked again, once, very loudly.

Raven Boy looked out to sea.

'He said he can . . . Oh! Look!'

Now they both saw what Rat had seen, because sailing into view over the horizon was a big ship. A big ship with coal-black sails.

'It must be Captain Blackblood!' Raven Boy gasped.

'Let's find Mervin! It's time to get invisible!'

They ran back up the beach and into the clearing.

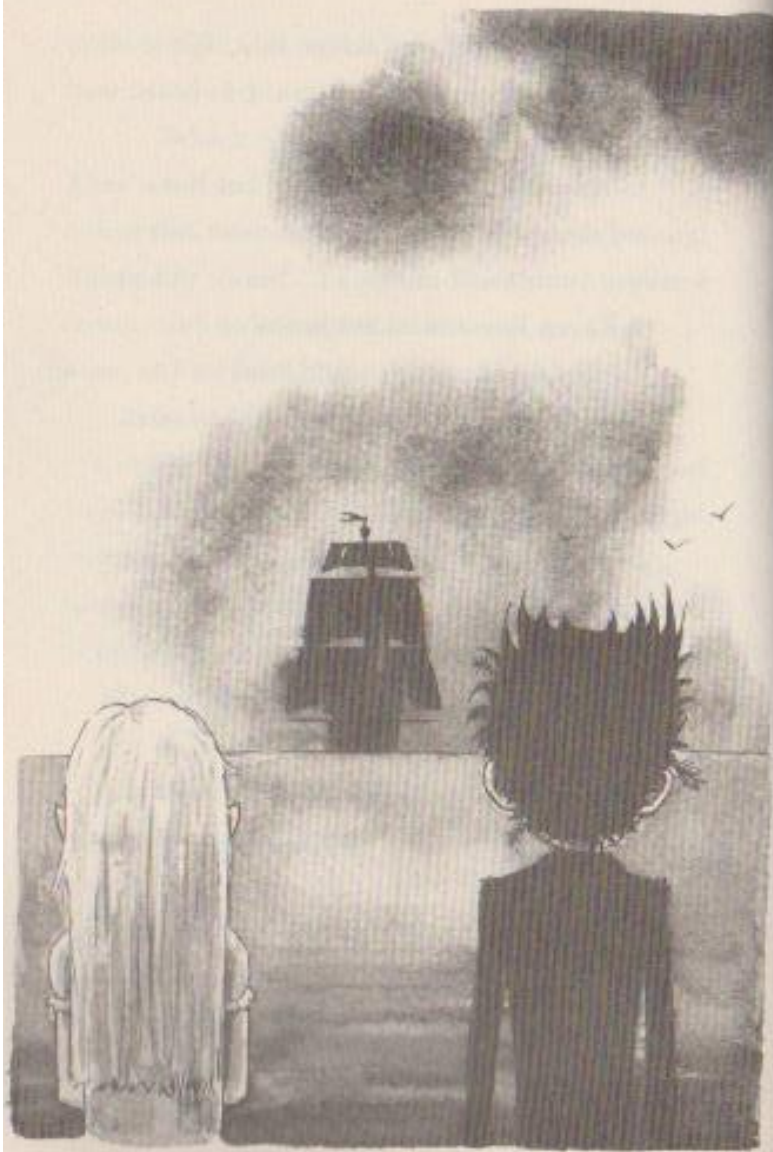
Mervin had made a huge cake, several tiers high, and was just wishing up some cherries to put on the top.

'There!' he said, admiring his handiwork.

'Done!'

'Mervin!' cried Elf Girl. 'They're here! A ship's coming! We think it's the *Sea Dragon*.'

'Does it have black sails?'



Raven Boy and Elf Girl nodded.

'Yes, that's it,' said Mervin. 'Oh, bother. And I've just finished this cake.'

'Never mind the cake!' screamed Raven Boy. 'Make us invisible! Quick!'

'All in good time,' said Mervin. 'Won't you have a piece of birthday cake first?'

'Please make us invisible!' begged Raven Boy. 'And then we'll have as much cake as you like. We promise!'

Mervin thought for a moment.

'All right,' he said. 'Very well. Come on then, stand in front of me, here.'

'And Rat?' asked Raven Boy.

'And the rat too,' said Mervin. 'Now, just stand still, and here we go.'

Raven Boy and Elf Girl were panicking so much they didn't even see what it was Mervin did to turn them invisible. He didn't have a magic wand, and they didn't even hear him say any magic words but, next thing they knew, they'd vanished.

'Elf Girl!' said Raven Boy excitedly. 'I can't see you! You've gone!'

'I'm right here,' she said, 'but so have you! Pouf! Just like that!'

'Rat? Are you there?'

From Raven Boy's head, Rat squeaked.

'Just stay on my head, okay? I don't want to step on you.'

Rat squeaked again, and dug his claws into Raven Boy's spiky hair.

'Now,' said Mervin, 'won't you have a piece of cake?'



'But I can still see you,' said Elf Girl.
'And the cake. Won't you make everything invisible first? So we can stop worrying about the pirates!'

Mervin sighed.

'Very well,' he said at last, and then he vanished and, a moment later, so did his cake.

'It looked so pretty,' he said. 'It's a shame not to see it. Well, anyway, let me cut you a slice and then you can sing me happy birthday.'

'Sing?' cried Raven Boy.

'Yes, sing!' said Mervin. 'It's my birthday. You do want to sing to me, don't you? After I've been so helpful, and—'

'Yes, yes,' said Raven Boy, quickly. 'Just give me some cake and let's get on with it.'

So they did.

They all had cake and Raven Boy and Elf Girl sang happy birthday to Mervin, and then he seemed happier. Even Rat joined in.

No sooner had they finished than they heard shouts down on the beach.

'Blackblood!' cried Elf Girl.

'Shh!' hissed Raven Boy.

'Come on,' said Mervin. 'Let's go down and see what they're up to. Now, I've made a nice invisible packed lunch for you. There's enough for a few days, if you're careful. Here you are.'

'Where?' said Raven Boy.

'Here!' said Mervin. 'Just take it from me.'

'But I can't see you! Or it!'

'Oh, Raven Boy,' said Elf Girl, 'stop being so silly. Just use the sound of his voice. And feel for it. Here!'

She turned to where she thought Mervin was, just as Raven Boy tried again.

They bumped into each other and Elf Girl fell on her bottom.

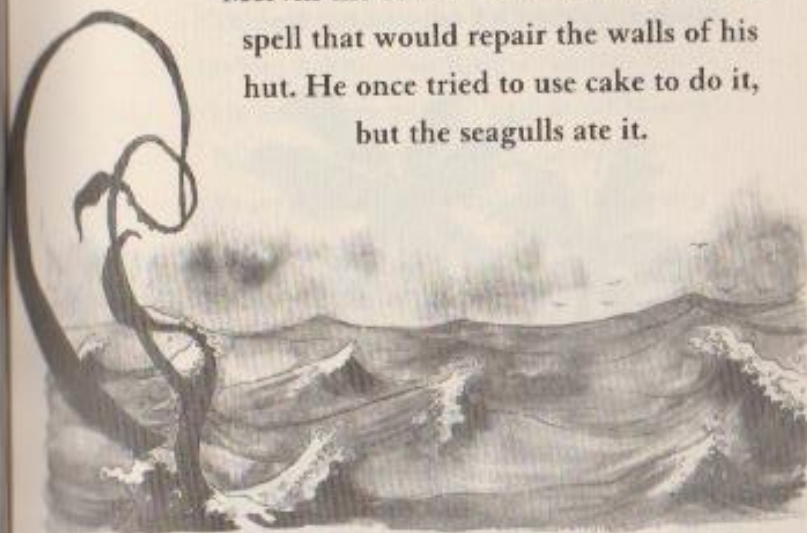
'Oh,' she said.

'What?'

'Mervin. I'm so sorry. I think I've just sat on your birthday cake.'

SIXTEEN

Mervin the Sandman can't remember the spell that would repair the walls of his hut. He once tried to use cake to do it, but the seagulls ate it.



Raven Boy and Elf Girl, Rat and Mervin crept as quietly as they could towards the sound of the pirates' voices. Every few steps, Elf Girl felt another squishy piece of birthday cake slide off her bottom.

'I'm going to smell of chocolate cake for days,' she moaned.

'Shh!' said Raven Boy, 'we're nearly there. Look!'

Chapter 15

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Summarise



V What does the word 'vanished' mean? Find three other words with a similar meaning.

I Elf Girl and Raven Boy were feeling scared when they saw Blackblood's boat. How do we know? Find two pieces of evidence from the text.

P What do you think will happen next?

E Explain why you think the longer they waited for Blackblood, the more scared they became.

R What happened to Mervin's cake?

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?

clear

Word Class:

Word Class:

Synonyms

Antonyms

@VocabularyNinja

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



The word I
want you to
investigate is
clear