



Let's read Chapter 17 and see what is happening to Elf Girl and Raven Boy.

they must be over there somewhere.'

Raven Boy pointed east, vaguely.

'But how far away are they?'

'About two days' walk.'

'Two days!' wailed Elf Girl. 'We can't take two days. We have to think of something faster.'

'I was coming to that too,' said Raven Boy. 'You see, there's that river we crossed before. It's not far from here and runs all the way there. If we could just find a boat or something, we could be there by this afternoon.'

'But how are we going to find a boat?'

'My eagle-eyed friend is looking for us.'

He told us to start walking towards the river and when he finds one, he's going to let me know.'

Elf Girl jumped up and down.

'Raven Boy! You're brilliant.'

Raven Boy nodded, smiling.

'Yes,' he said, 'yes, I am pretty cool, really.'

'Sometimes,' added Elf Girl, because she didn't want him to get too big-headed.



SEVENTEEN

Like ogres, trolls also eat anything,
chewy or not, but they're less hungry
in the daytime, when
they're in human form.

They were barely at the river before the eagle swooped overhead, calling to them.

Raven Boy looked up and waved, and the eagle soared away and off towards a distant mountain range.

'So?' asked Elf Girl.

'Elf Girl,' said Raven Boy, 'I know you find this hard to believe, but trust me. The eagle said there's a boat moored down the river by a



collapsed bridge. All we need to do is borrow it, and off we go.'

Elf Girl still looked doubtful, but to her irritation Florence seemed to have no problem at all with the fact that Raven Boy had had a conversation with a bird of prey nearly as big as him.

Rat seemed in a very good mood, and sat on Raven Boy's head squeaking merrily until they arrived at the collapsed bridge.

'That's not a boat!' cried Elf Girl. 'It would be fairer to call it a jam jar.'

'It is a bit small,' said Florence, 'for three.'

Rat squeaked.

'Four,' Raven Boy said. 'Yes, I know. But it will have to do.'

The boat was tiny, and looked rather old and beaten up too, and it was no surprise that someone had left it by the old bridge to rot.

'Does it have oars?' asked Elf Girl.

'One. Sort of,' said Raven Boy, climbing in and holding up a pole.

'That's not an oar. It's a pole.'

'Well, it will have to do. The current is fast, we'll just need to steer from time to time.'

They climbed aboard, and the boat sank horribly close to the water line.

'Is this a great idea?' asked Florence.

'Actually?'

Elf Girl had that expression on her face again, the one where she looked very determined and sad all at the same time.

'It's fine,' said Raven Boy, as a big slop of water lapped over the side and into the bottom



of the boat. 'Let's go!'

And off they went. Speedily.

Soon they had been dragged out into the centre of the river where the current was strongest and found themselves zipping along faster than they could have believed possible.

'We'll be there in no time!' cried Raven Boy.

'Or drowned!' wailed Florence, who wasn't enjoying it much.

Rat was enjoying it even less, and had hidden inside Raven Boy's shirt somewhere, and refused to come out, even to wave at a family of otters on the riverbank.

By the time they should have been having lunch, none of them were enjoying it at all.

It was Elf Girl who noticed it first.

'Should our feet be wet?' she said.

'Hmm?' said Raven Boy, who had worked out how to steer the boat by dragging the pole in the water behind them at different angles. 'Did you say something?'

'Yes. I said, should our feet be wet?'

Soaking wet?'

Then they all noticed that there was a lot

of water coming into the boat, through the bottom.

'EEEP!' wailed Raven Boy. 'We're sinking!'

'Never mind that!' cried Florence, who was sitting at the front.

'What do you mean, never mind? We could sink any second!'

'I think that's very likely, as it happens,' shouted Florence. 'Look!'

Florence had seen what none of the others had, that the river was about to stop.

About to stop in the way that rivers do when they go over a waterfall.

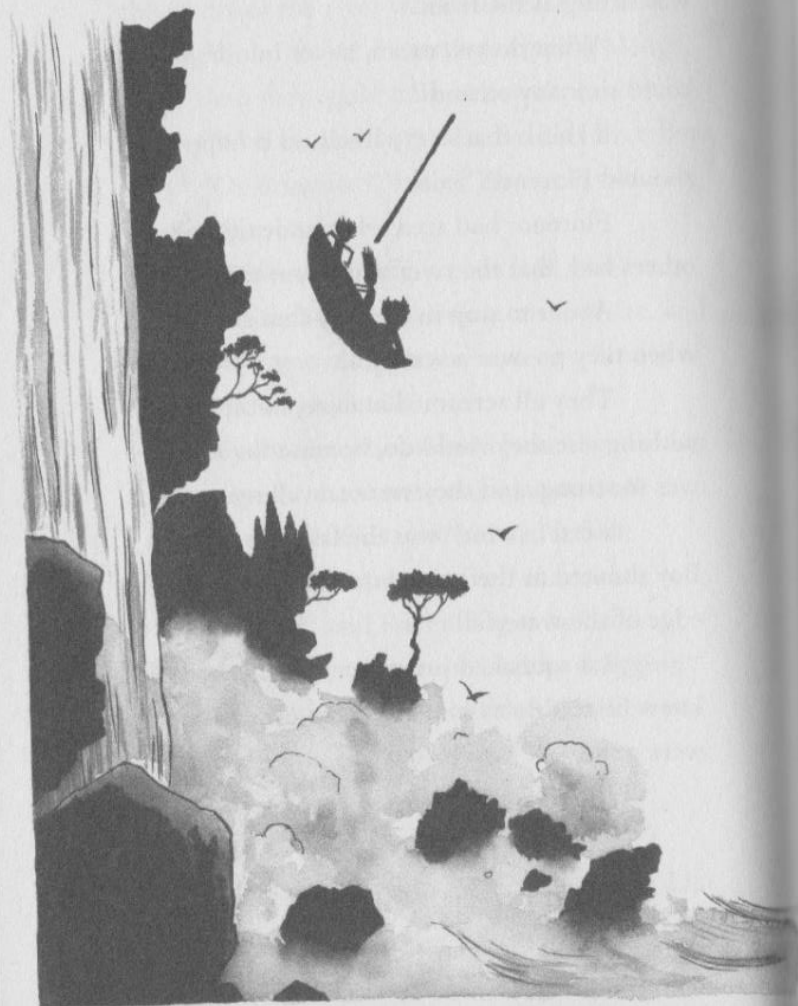
They all screamed at once, but there was nothing else they could do, because the river was so strong, and they were travelling so fast.

'I can't swim!' was the last thing Raven Boy shouted as their tiny boat tipped over the edge of the waterfall.

Rat squeaked just to make sure they all knew he couldn't swim either, and then they were gone.



It seemed as if they were falling forever, though it only took a second or three before they splashed into a lake below the waterfall.



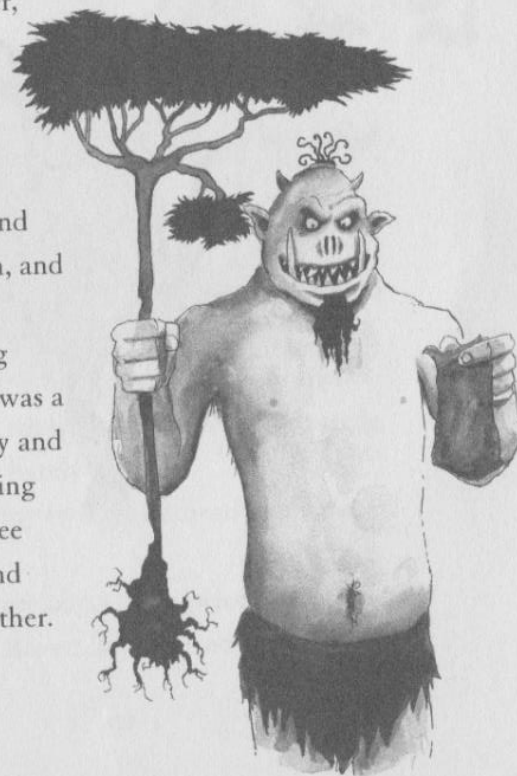
Elf Girl surfaced first and dragged Raven Boy by the neck towards the bank. Florence seemed to be coping quite well, but Rat was nowhere to be seen. Then he popped up out of the water for a moment, and Florence grabbed him and sat him on her head.

They struggled to the bank choking and spluttering, when suddenly, the sun went out.

Or rather, something got in the way of it.

They all looked up and screamed again, and then fainted.

Looking down at them was a very large, ugly and frankly terrifying ogre, with a tree in one hand and a sack in the other.



Reading Vipers

Vocabulary

Infer

Predict

Explain

Retrieve

Summarise



V What does 'moored' mean? (P.165)

I How did everyone feel about being in the boat? Tell me about each character and find evidence from the text.

P What do you think is going to happen in the next chapter?

E Explain why Florence said 'Never mind that!'

R How did rat let everyone know that he couldn't swim?

S Summarise this chapter in 3 sentences.

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?

believe

Word Class:

Word Class:

Synonyms

Antonyms

@VocabularyNinja

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



The word I
want you to
investigate is

believe