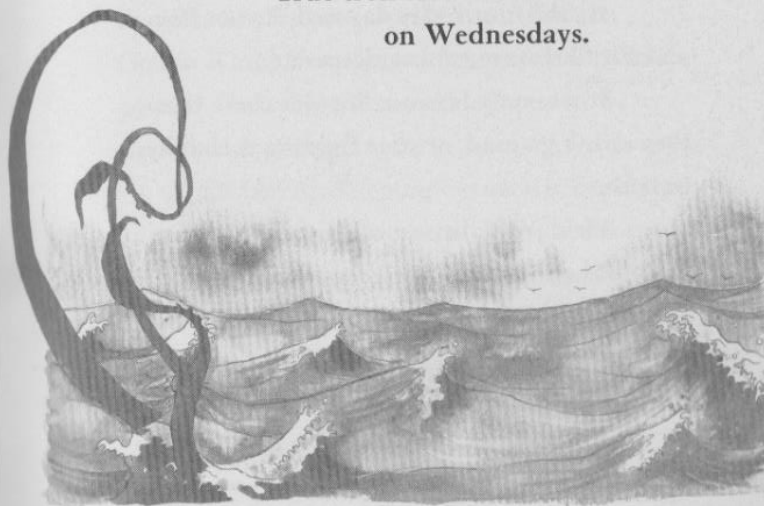


Let's read Chapter 7 and see what is happening to Raven Boy and Elf Girl!

his little rat head, he wasn't really any clearer about how to get them out of the ship's hold than they were.

SEVEN

True troll fact: Trolls smell worse on Wednesdays.



'They can't keep us down here for ever,' said Raven Boy.

They stared into the darkness.

Three days later, Elf Girl said, 'Are you sure about that?'

Every now and again, one of the pirates lifted the lid of the hatch and threw a bit of bread down to them, bread so old it was furry. Or a flask of warm water. Then the hatch

would slide shut again and they'd hear a bolt being drawn across.

As the fourth day dawned, Raven Boy and Elf Girl were getting desperate.

It was only because Rat was there that they didn't go mad, or start fighting each other, or both.

He'd sneak up out of the hold and run around the ship, taking great care not to be seen by anyone. Once a day, at least, he'd run around listening to what the pirates were saying and then he'd report back to Raven Boy.

After one trip, Rat was full of news, and squeaked as though someone had trod on his tail.

Raven Boy explained what he'd said.

'He says it's only another day to Blackheart Isle. That's where they're taking us.'

'To sell?' asked Elf Girl.

'I'm afraid so,' said Raven Boy. 'And Blackheart Isle doesn't sound the nicest place ever. But that's not the worst of it.'

'Not the worst!' exclaimed Elf Girl.

Rat was squeaking still, with his fur all fluffed up, he was so excited. Raven Boy could

barely keep up.

'He says . . . He says . . . Oh! He says that Blackheart Isle is in the control of the Goblin King! If we get sold there, we'll be in his power! Then there'll be nothing we can do to stop him! Nothing!'

Elf Girl made a gurgling noise in her throat.

'Ulp,' she said, eventually. 'We're doomed!'

'Don't give up,' said Raven Boy. 'We still have another day to escape.'

'But how?' cried Elf Girl. 'We're stuck down here.'

'Maybe Rat could chew through the walls for us . . .'

Rat squeaked. It wasn't a happy squeak.

'Well?' asked Elf Girl.

'He says it would take him a month. The planks of the ship are so thick.'

'We have to do something. We only have a day left.'

'Maybe we can try pleading,' said Raven Boy. 'Or begging. Or you could try crying and I could try sobbing.'

'Raven Boy,' said Elf Girl, 'that's the

dumbest idea I've ever heard, and anyway, I refuse to cry in front of those nasty pirates. I simply refuse.'

'Wow,' said Raven Boy. 'You're very brave.'

Elf Girl didn't feel brave. She sat in the dark and was glad Raven Boy couldn't see her properly, so he couldn't see that she was shaking.

'If only I had my bow,' she said after a while.

'Yes, but Captain Nasty has it. And you're making him super mad by not telling him how to use it.'

'But I can't, can I? And even if I could, I wouldn't.'

'Can't you give him some idea? Then maybe he'd let us go.'

'I don't think so, Raven Boy. I think he's going to sell us no matter what.'

'But I didn't like what he said yesterday.'

'Yesterday?'

'Yes, yesterday. You know. When he said that if you didn't tell him by the time we got to the island, he'd pull my toes off until you told him.'

'I don't think he meant that,' said Elf Girl.

'I'd rather not find out, if it's all the same to you. Couldn't you tell him something at least? Make it up, just to buy us time? He'll be back before too long.'

That was true.

Captain Scrim had been visiting them once a day, squinting down through the hatch, and demanding to be told how the bow worked.

He'd obviously been trying to use it, but hadn't got it to do a thing. Not one thing. Not even make another piglet.

Just then, there was the sound of the bolt being drawn back, and the hatch slid open.

Bright sunlight poured into the hold, and Elf Girl and Raven Boy sat blinking, shielding their eyes from the light.

'So!' roared Scrim. 'This is your last chance. Tell me how the bow works, or it's no more toes for the bird boy!'

Maybe he does mean it, thought Elf Girl, desperately trying to come up with a plan.

'All right,' she said, 'but you have to promise not to hurt us if I do.'



'I promise no such thing. But I promise I'll pull all *your* toes off as well if you don't tell me! Right now!'

'Okay, okay,' said Elf Girl, thinking fast. 'It's like this. In order to make the bow work, you have to think really nice thoughts. Nice ones. If you're not thinking totally and completely lovely things in your head when you use it, nothing happens. Nothing at all.'

The captain listened to all of this with his mouth hanging open, all his gold teeth glinting in the sunlight.

'Nice thoughts?' he roared. He roared a lot.

'Nice. It's a nice bow, made by nice elves.'



'But . . . But, I don't know any nice thoughts! I'm an evil pirate captain! I don't know how to think nice!'

'You'll have to,' said Elf Girl, almost believing it herself. 'If you want to make it work, you're going to have to learn how to think nice things.'

'Garr!' said Scrim.

'I feel sorry for you,' Elf Girl went on. 'So I'll help you. Try thinking about fluffy bunnies. Lots of them. It's very hard to be mean if you're thinking about fluffy bunnies.'

With that, the lid slid shut again, with a bang, and they were plunged into darkness once more.

'Elf Girl!' whispered Raven Boy, 'you're a genius! He'll never do it!'

'Exactly, but he'll keep trying. It should buy us some time, at least.'

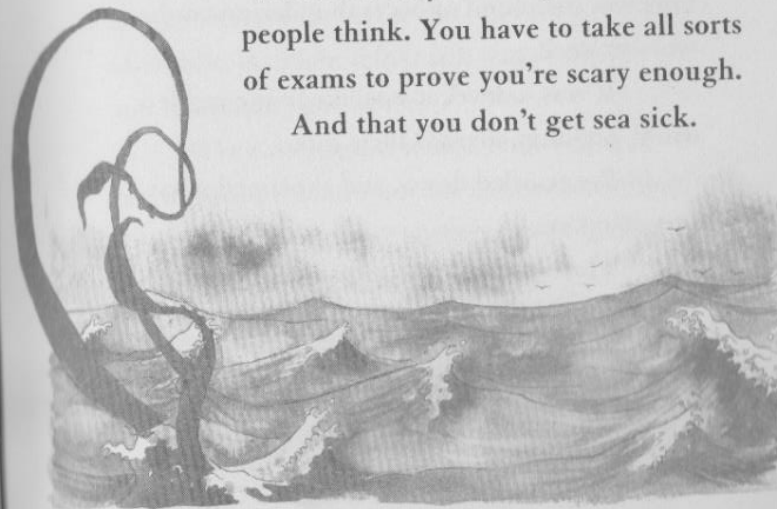
'But time's what we don't have. By tomorrow, we'll be sold as slaves on Blackheart Isle.'

All three of them fell silent again, pondering their gloomy fate.

EIGHT

It's not as easy to be a pirate as some people think. You have to take all sorts of exams to prove you're scary enough.

And that you don't get sea sick.



The day wore on.

Rat went exploring again, searching for some way of getting his friends out of the trouble they were in.

Around teatime, one of the crew chucked a slice of dried bread down to them, and they glumly chewed it in silence.

Then, suddenly, they heard shouts. They couldn't hear what was being said – the

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary

Infer

Predict

Explain

Retrieve

Summarise



V What is a 'hatch'?

I How are Raven Boy and Elf Girl feeling about arriving at Blackheart Isle?
Find 3 pieces of evidence from the text.

P What do you think the Pirate Captain will do with the bow?

E Explain why Elf Girl tells the Pirate Captain that the bow will only work if he thinks nice thoughts.

R Why can't rat chew threw the walls?

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?

chew

Word Class:

Word Class:

Synonyms

Antonyms

@VocabularyNinja

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



The word I
want you to
investigate is

chew