

Let's read Chapter 12 and see what is happening to Raven Boy and Elf Girl!

nodded, and pushed on into the jungle.

'We might find some fruit to eat,' he said. 'That would be a start.'

And then, they stumbled out from the trees and found themselves in a clearing.

There, stood a funny little shack.

'You were saying?' asked Raven Boy, feeling pleased with himself.

Elf Girl sighed.

'All right, Smart Beak, you win. Let's have a look.'

Raven Boy nodded.

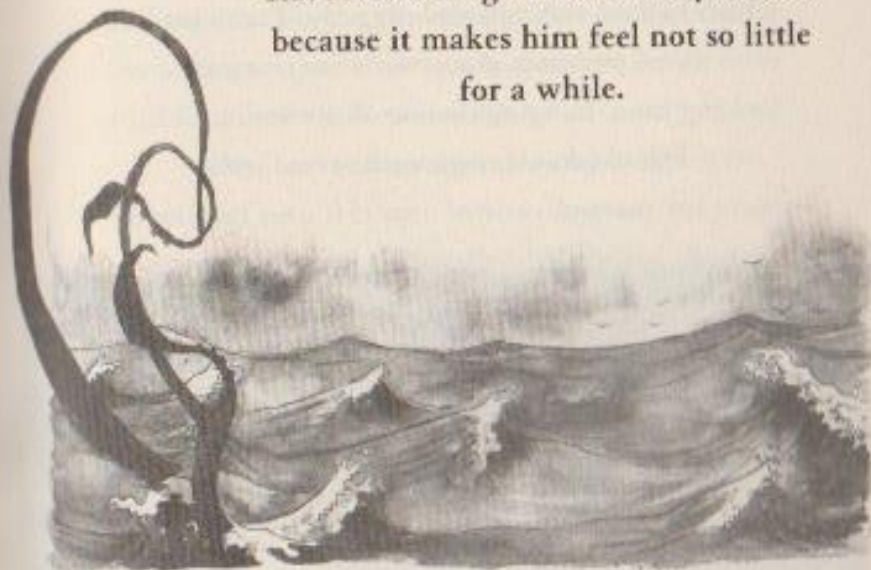
'But Raven Boy! Be careful! It could be dangerous.'

He nodded again.

As it turned out, Elf Girl was, as so often, right.

TWELVE

Rat loves sitting on Raven Boy's head,
because it makes him feel not so little
for a while.



The shack had a single room, and even that had only two walls and a roof. What kept the roof from falling down was a wooden post in the corner where the two missing walls would have met.

It had a wooden floor and even a tatty piece of carpet on it, and standing on the floor was a very old and beaten-up armchair, a table, and a bed pushed against one of the walls. One

of the actual walls. There were a few cupboards and shelves, and all sorts of odd things, all of which looked very old and raggedy. There was even an oil painting, a portrait of a strange-looking man, hanging on one of the walls.

It looked as though no one had been there for years.



‘Wow,’ said Elf Girl. ‘What a weird place!’

They found lots of books, maps, charts, and peculiar objects that they didn’t even know the names of, pencils, more books, and more stuff that made no sense at all.

They sat on the carpet, staring in different directions, both feeling a little sulky.

Rat scuttled under the bed, fearing that they were about to start arguing again.

And none of them saw the footprints walking towards the shack, across the sand. Just footprints, appearing one by one, with nothing else attached.

‘You smell.’

‘I do not!’ cried Raven Boy and Elf Girl, whirling round to look at each other.

‘Why did you say that?’ they both said together.

‘What?’ they both said.

‘What are you doing?’ asked Raven Boy.

‘Stop being silly,’ said Elf Girl.

They turned away to sulk again.

‘You still smell.’

They both turned and glared at each other.

'I do not!' they both said, and then,
'Stop it!'

'Raven Boy ...'

'Elf Girl ...'

They glared at each other, and turned
away once more.

'Smell-y!'

And with that they both jumped on each
other, kicking and scratching and generally
being naughty.

And they would have gone on, except a
coconut fell on their heads.

'Ow!' said Raven Boy, rubbing his bird hair.

Another coconut fell on Elf Girl.

'Eee!' she wailed.

They looked up, and saw that there
wasn't a tree above their heads.

'Where did that come from?' asked
Raven Boy, too puzzled to feel hurt now.

'I don't—' began Elf Girl, but she didn't
finish, because another coconut came hurtling at
them.

'Ow! That really hurt,' moaned Raven
Boy, rubbing his backside.

Suddenly the coconuts came thick and
fast, and they began to try to dodge them, and
work out where they were coming from at the
same time.



'Look!' cried Elf Girl. She ducked a flying coconut and pointed to the side of the shack, where there was a whole pile of coconuts, which appeared to be picking themselves up and throwing themselves through thin air.

'Magic coconuts!' shrieked Elf Girl.

'Haunted, you mean!' wailed Raven Boy, as another nut clipped his ear.

The coconuts kept flying, and then suddenly there was the sound of someone sneezing loudly, and the next second, a man appeared from nowhere, holding a coconut in each hand.

'Ooh!' shouted Elf Girl. 'Get him!'

'Yes,' said Raven Boy, who was really mad at being hit by so many coconuts. 'Get him!'

They charged the man, and pinned him to the ground. He was not that big and not that strong either, and Elf Girl and Raven Boy had no trouble holding him down, though Rat sat on his face just to make sure. There was something very odd about him, though. His skin seemed to be made of sand.

'I'm sorry,' he said, 'please don't hurt me!

I won't tell anyone you're here; just leave me alone.'

'What do you mean?' asked Raven Boy.

'Please let me up. I won't do anything, I promise.'

'Why do you keep saying that?' asked Elf Girl.

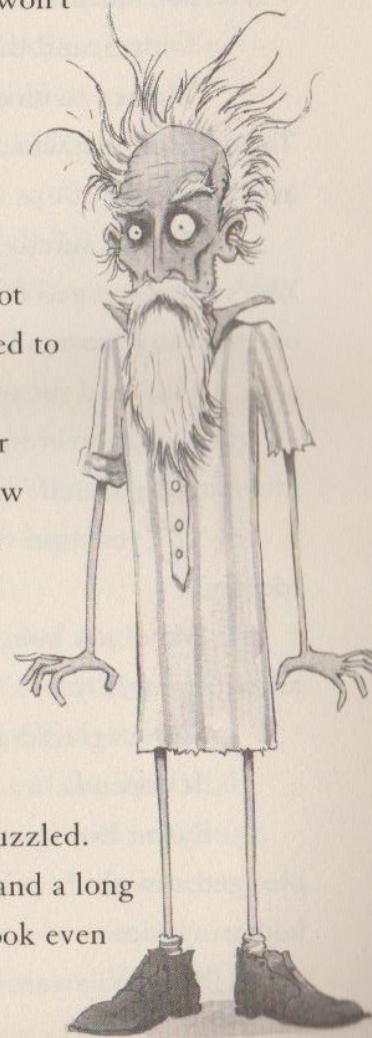
They let him up, because he was sniffing a lot by now and they had started to feel sorry for him.

'Because if the other pirates come here and know you've been here they'll be awfully mad.'

'Other pirates?' asked Raven Boy.

'Yes, the other pirates.'

The man looked puzzled. He had rather crazy eyes and a long beard, which made him look even more strange.



'You are pirates, aren't you?' he said.

'No,' said Elf Girl. 'We're not. I'm Elf Girl and this is Raven Boy.'

Rat squeaked.

'Oh yes, and that's Rat.'

'Pleased to meet you,' said the man.

Then added suspiciously, 'Are you sure you aren't pirates?'

'Totally sure,' explained Raven Boy.

'We've just escaped from pirates, and then lost our boat in a storm. Then we washed up here.'

'Oh,' said the old man.

'And who are you, anyway? You haven't introduced yourself.'

'Oh, yes,' said the man. 'My name's Mervin.'

'May I ask you a personal question?' asked Raven Boy.

Mervin glared at him.

'It depends.'

Raven Boy ignored that answer and plunged straight in with the thing that had been bothering him.

'Are you aware you seem to be covered

in sand?'

Mervin exploded. Well, he didn't, but he did exclaim very loudly.

'Of course I'm covered in sand! In fact, I'm made of sand! I wouldn't be much of a Sandman if I wasn't, would I?'

'A Sandman?' cried Elf Girl and Raven Boy together, and even Rat squeaked. 'You're made of sand? That's not possible!'

'Of course it is,' said Mervin, huffily. 'You can be made of anything when you're magical.'

'You can do magic?'

'Of course I can,' said Mervin proudly. 'That's how we fly round the world putting little children to sleep every night.'

Then he looked sad.

'Only I'm not very good any more,' he said. 'I've forgotten almost everything.'

'But you made yourself invisible!'

'Yes, but that's all I can do. That and make food. I've forgotten how to do anything else. And even the invisibility thing is pretty hopeless. It wears off when you sneeze.'

'When you sneeze?' asked Elf Girl, but

Raven Boy had other things on his mind.

'Did you say make food?' he asked, his eyes widening.

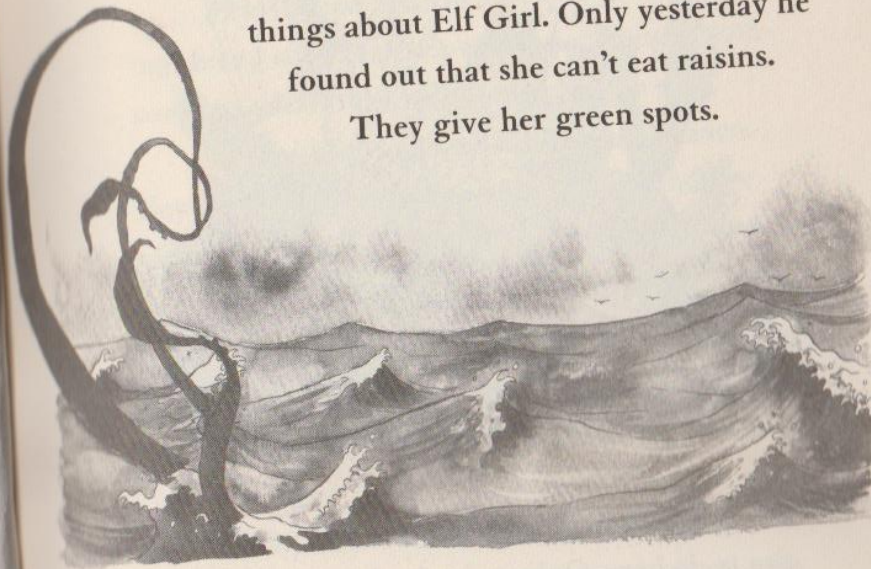
'Yes,' said Mervin. 'Would you like some?'

And Raven Boy and Elf Girl nodded so hard their heads nearly fell off.

THIRTEEN

Raven Boy is always discovering new things about Elf Girl. Only yesterday he found out that she can't eat raisins.

They give her green spots.



Not very long after, Raven Boy and Elf Girl were stuffing their faces with all sorts of food, and washing it down with anything they wanted to drink.

It seemed that Mervin the Sandman was still very good at making food, and he could make whatever they asked for, only more delicious than they thought possible.

'I get lots of practice with food magic,'

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary

Infer

Predict

Explain

Retrieve

Summarise



V What does the 'suspiciously' mean?

I How were Elf Girl and Raven Boy feeling about the chance to have some food? Explain your answer.

P What do you think will happen next?

E Explain why the shack looked as if no-one had lived there for years.

R Why was the man made of sand?

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?

appear

Word Class:

Word Class:

Synonyms

Antonyms

simply

@VocabularyNinja

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



The word I
want you to
investigate is
appear