

Six Kids

on

BANDIT ISLAND

by Carissa Taylor



SIX KIDS ON BANDIT ISLAND

Chapters: 14
Word Count: 5600

This decodable book focuses on the *short vowels a and i*, but includes words with the other short vowels as well. There are about 30 high frequency words in the text, as well as a few challenge words to fit the theme.

LETTER SOUNDS

Hard consonants & short vowels (with focus on a and i)

Digraphs: th sh ch qu, wh

HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS

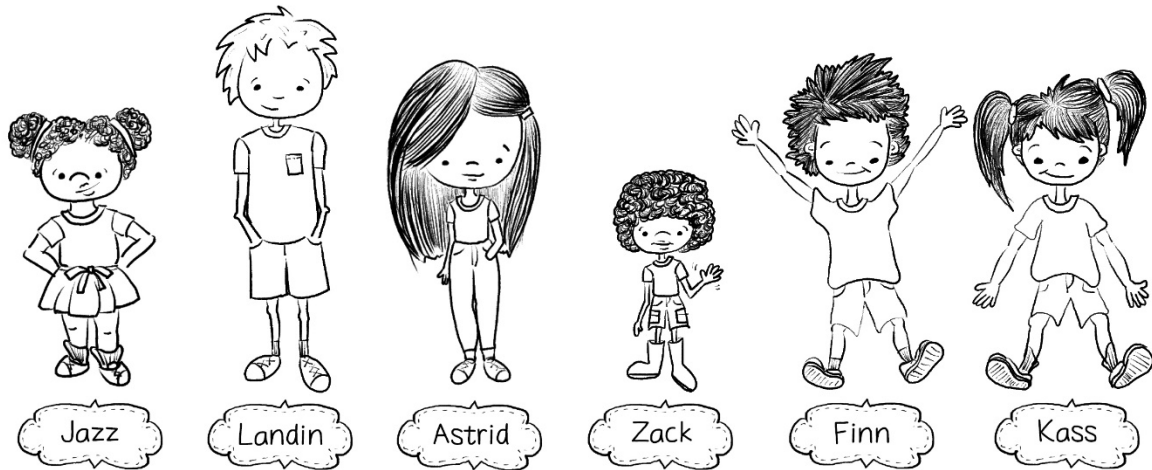
Listed in order of frequency of occurrence in the text.

the	a	says	to
they	we	he	need
she	down	no	see
are	her	you	what
go	into	of	for
there	have	I	don't
from	day	my	today
didn't	may	onto	me

TRICKY WORDS

Listed in order of frequency. Note that only the words in the first row are used more than a handful of times.

island	water	fire	OK
sky	storm	house	tree
light	people	hello	sea
snake	acid		



CHAPTER 1

THE SIX KIDS PACK FOR THE TRIP

In the attic, six kids pack for a trip. The trip is to Picnic Island, and they will go on a ship. Jazz checks her list. The twins, Kass and Finn, flip into hand-stands.

“Will we need this?” Zack asks Jazz. He lifts up a bag of sun-hats.

“Yes, pack that.” Astrid grabs it, and crams it into the big bag.

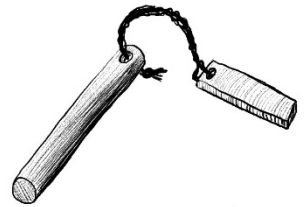
“And will we need this?” Kass asks. She wags a lamp.

“No...” Astrid says.

“And ... Will we need this?” Finn asks. He flaps black fabric scraps.

“And this?” He smacks a tin rabbit trap.

“No!!!!” Astrid grins.



Flint

A draft of wind hits the kids. The attic chills.

“Quick, finish up. I need a snack,” Landin says. He kicks a stack of wigs. A wig slips.

“But,” says Jazz. “On my list are snacks, and a flint, and a map and --”

“And trash? No!” Landin slaps Jazz’s list.

Jazz gasps. “That’s not trash! We need a map for the trip!”

“A map?? Cap’n Jack has a map! We don’t need a map.”

“We can’t tramp up and down Picnic Island with no map! And a flint! We need a flint!”

Jazz flaps her list for the trip.

“What’s a flint?” Zack asks.

“A flint?? A flint sets a fire. You will not need that!” Landin snaps.

Jazz is sad. “But my trip list --”

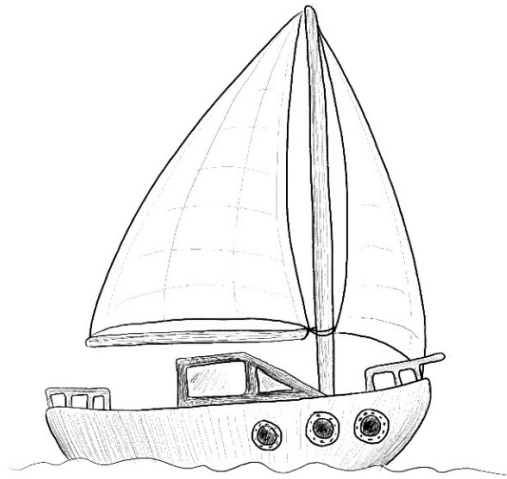
“Stick it in the trash-can.” Landin stamps down from the attic.

Jazz bit her lip.

Astrid pats Jazz’s hand. “Don’t get sad. He just can’t admit that we need to *plan* for the trip. Pack the map and flint if you wish.”

OK.” Jazz sniffs and slips the map and flint in her backpack, with snacks and a bit of flat plastic.

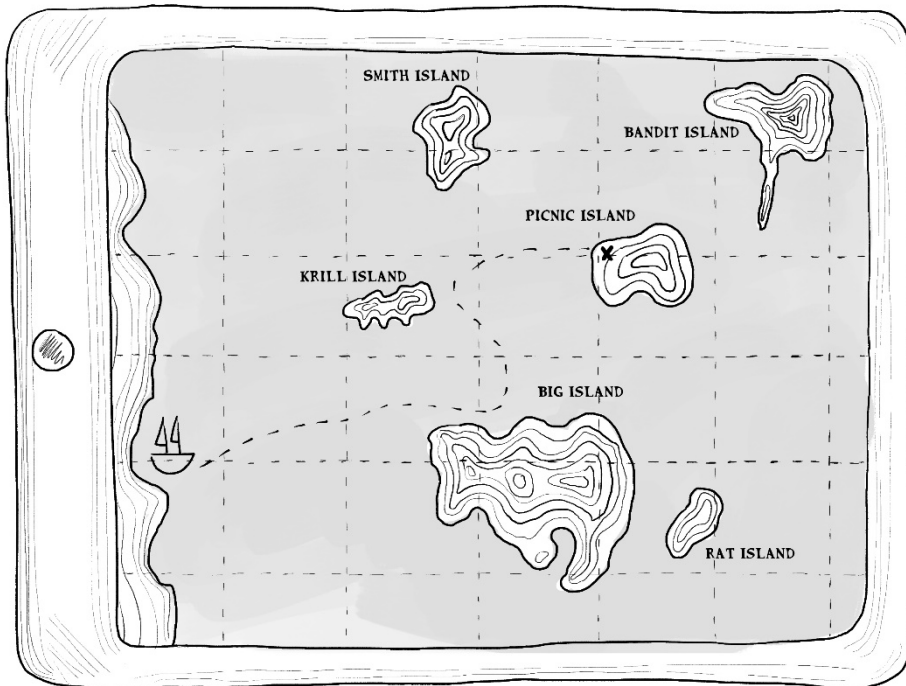
“Kids!” yells Dad. “Cap’n Jack has to go. We need to get to the ship!”



CHAPTER 2 ON THE SHIP

“Hello!” says Cap’n Jack. He tips the brim of his cap to the kids.
“Hello Cap’n Jack!” they chant, as they lift the bags up to the ship.
The ship tilts as they stand on it. Zack grabs Astrid’s hand.
“It’s OK. Ships tilt a bit,” Astrid says, and pats Zack’s back.
“Bye!” yells Dad. “Have a fun trip!”

Jazz skips into the ship’s cabin. “Cap’n Jack, have you got a map?”
“I don’t need a map. I have Sat-Nav!” He taps a tablet. A map pops
up on a grid.



“Six islands:

Krill Island,
Big Island,
Smith Island,
Rat Island,
Bandit Island,
and
Picnic Island!”

“Which we will
visit!” chant the
twins.

“Yep. Picnic is
the island we will
visit. A picnic on
Picnic Island!”
says Cap’n Jack.

“Are bandits on Bandit Island?” Zack asks.
Cap’n Jack grins. “Bandits? No, not today. Just in the past.”

“And what is this, Cap’n Jack?” Jazz asks. She pats a black box.

“*That* is the V.H.F.”

“The V.H.F.? What is that?”

“I have it to chat with my pals. And to yell S.O.S.”

“S.O.S.?”

“Yes. To yell for help if it’s bad and the ship fills with water.”
The kids gasp, but Cap’n Jack grins.

“No, no. It isn’t bad today. Today is just sun, sun, sun! OK are we set to visit the Islands?”

“Yes!!!!!!” The kids grin.

“Blast off!” Zack chants as they drift on the water to Picnic Island. The water glints, and the wind is chill. Fish splash. The fabric slaps on the mast.

Kass and Finn flap the ship’s flag as the ship zig-zags and zips.

“Isn’t this a thrill?” Astrid asks. She dips her hand in the water.

“This ship tips and tilts. I am sick.” Zack says.

Landin grins and slaps his back. “Don’t yack!”

“Landin! Quit it!” Astrid snaps.

“Can we have the picnic?” Finn asks.

“On the island,” Astrid says. “Snack on this.” She hands him an apple.
But then Jazz sees the sky. “Cap’n Jack, what is that?”

The sky is dim. There is no sun.

Cap’n Jack gasps.

“What????!!!” the kids ask.

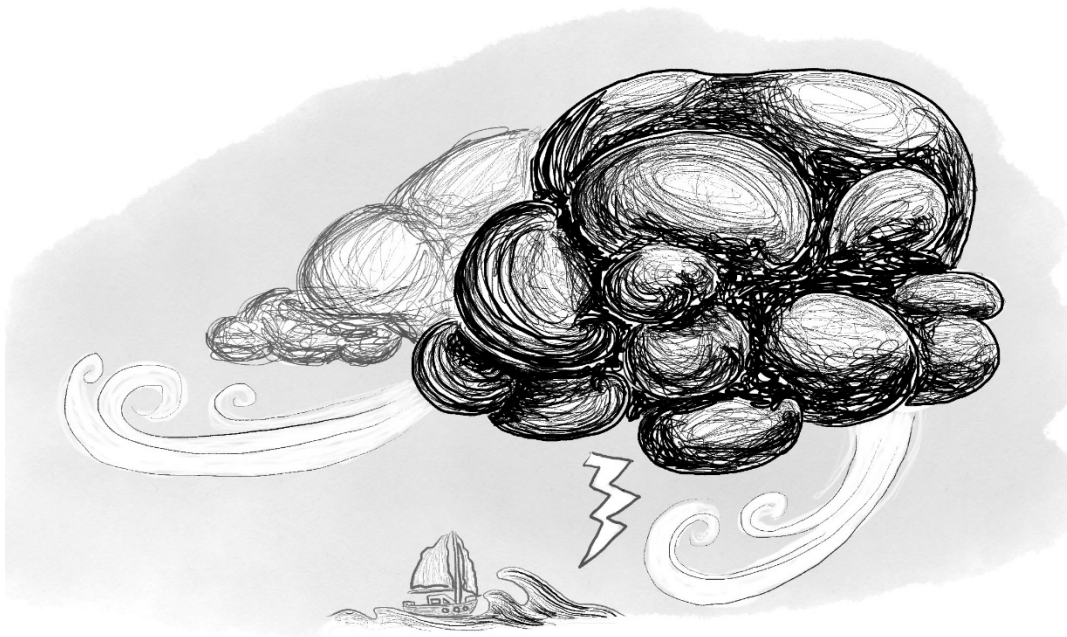
The wind whips. The ship tilts.

The sky is black, black, black.

“*That* is bad,” says Cap’n Jack.



V.H.F. Radio



CHAPTER 3

STORM ON THE WATER

Wind blasts the ship.
The sky is still black. A flash rips the black sky. *Flash! Crash! Flash!*
The ship dips and shifts. The fabric on the mast flips and flaps.

ZIPI SLAPI THWACK!

Cap'n Jack grabs his pack.
"The fabric! If it twists, it will rip," he says. "I need to go up and fix it. You go into the cabin. Latch the hatch."
The kids just stand still.
"This isn't a drill! It's a storm!" Cap'n Jack gasps. He skids as the ship tips. Water spills into the ship. "Go! Go!"

Cap'n Jack jumps up onto the mast.
Astrid grabs Zack. Landin grabs Kass and Finn.
Jazz runs to the back of the ship.
"Jazz!" Astrid panics.
"But we need the map!" Jazz gasps.
Jazz grabs her backpack with the map.

SNAP! CRACK!

"No!" Astrid gasps, as the ship's mast snaps and then tips.

SPLASH!

The mast slams into the water,
and with it slams Cap'n Jack.

Landin sprints to a raft. He
casts it into the water.
“Cap'n Jack!!!!” the kids yell.
They can't see Cap'n Jack.
“Cap'n Jack!” they yell and yell
and yell, as the ship drifts.
But there is no Cap'n Jack.

The ship tips. Water fills the
ship. The sky is still black with
the storm.
“Go in the cabin!” Landin yells.

The kids run. They skid into the
cabin. Landin slams the cabin
hatch shut.

He grabs the V.H.F.

“S.O.S.!” he yells. “S.O.S. We are in a storm! The wind has hit! The sky is black! The
mast is down in the water! And with it is Cap'n Jack!”

The V.H.F. just click-clacks. Landin slams it down.

“It's just static! I can't fix it!” he yells.

SMASH! CRASH! SPLASH!

The water fills and fills the ship.

“We need to go!” Astrid gasps. “On the last raft.”

“Yes,” Landin says. “Grab the snacks!”

“And my bag!” yells Jazz.

As she grabs it, the ship smacks and dips.

CRASH! TIP!

The snack bag spills.

“Ditch it! Ditch it!” Landin yells. He slams the hatch.

On deck the wind blasts.

The kids slip.

“Grab onto the handles!” Landin yells.

“They are slick! I can't get a grip!” says Kass.

“I can't swim!” yells Finn.

“OK, don't panic! Just grab my hand and hop into the raft,” says Astrid.

“We will flip!” yells Zack.

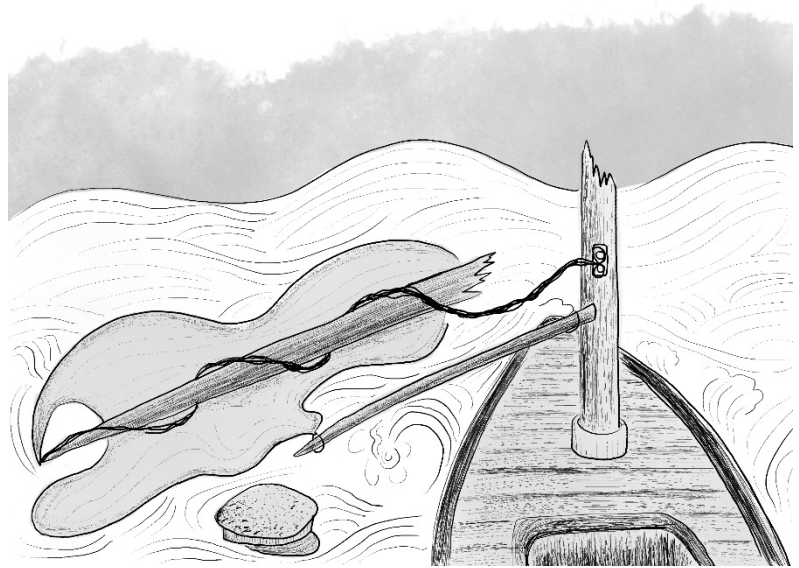
“Yes, it's a risk, but we need to get in the raft. The ship --” Landin gasps as he sees
the ship.

The water fills the ship to the brim. The kids dash into the raft.

FLASH! SLAM! SPLASH!

The big ship slips down, down, down into the water.

The raft drifts and drifts into the black storm and the kids go with it.





CHAPTER 4

ADRIFT ON THE RAFT

The raft drifts in a black mist as water laps at it. At last, the wind shifts. The black mist lifts. The storm stops and the sun is back. Sun, sun, sun . . . but no ship, no Cap'n Jack, and no land.

“Are we lost?” Zack sobs.

Jazz grasps her map. She twists in the raft, but she can't see land.

“No islands,” she says.

The raft spins and drifts. The water glints as they slip past.

“I need a snack.” Zack sniffs and kicks the bag, but no snacks are in it.

“In the water are fish,” Kass says. She dips her hand in.

Astrid gasps. “Don't! The raft will tip!”

“She can't catch fish with her hands,” Landin snaps.

“But I need a snack!” Zack yells.

“We will snack on land,” Astrid says.

“OK. Then can we land on an island?” Zack asks.

“WHAT island?” Landin yells. “Can you SEE an island?”

“No!” Zack bit his lip.

“OK!” Landin yells. He hits the raft with his hand.

“Don't get mad!” Zack yells back.

“It's just ... this is bad!” Landin yells. “No snacks! No ship! No Cap'n Jack. No--”

“Land!” Finn yells.

“Yes. No land,” Landin says.

“No! See! It's land!” Finn jabs his hand.

The six kids squint. The sun glints.
Is it? ...

“An island!” Jazz yells.

“Quick!” Kass dips her hands in the water. “We can’t drift past and miss the island!!”

SPLASH!

Astrid is in the water.

“Astrid!” the kids yell.

Astrid grabs the raft and kicks. “I can swim. I’ll drag you on the raft.”

“OK. I can help you,” Landin says.

SPLASH!

Astrid and Landin swim and drag, swim and drag.

The sun dips.

“We need to go fast!” Finn yells. “The sun will set and it will get black.”

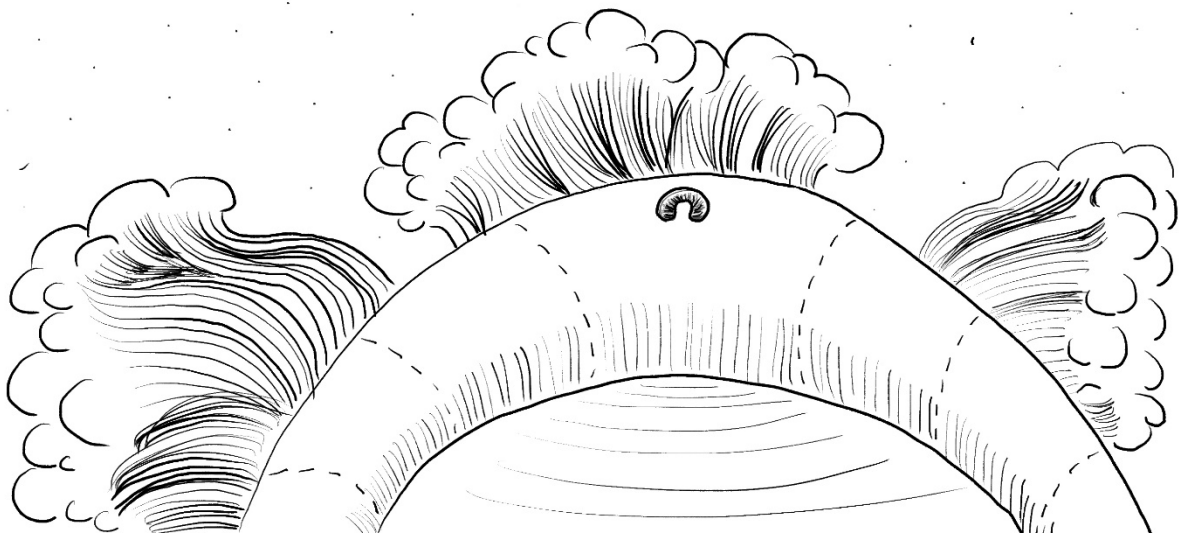
They swim and swim and swim, and at last...

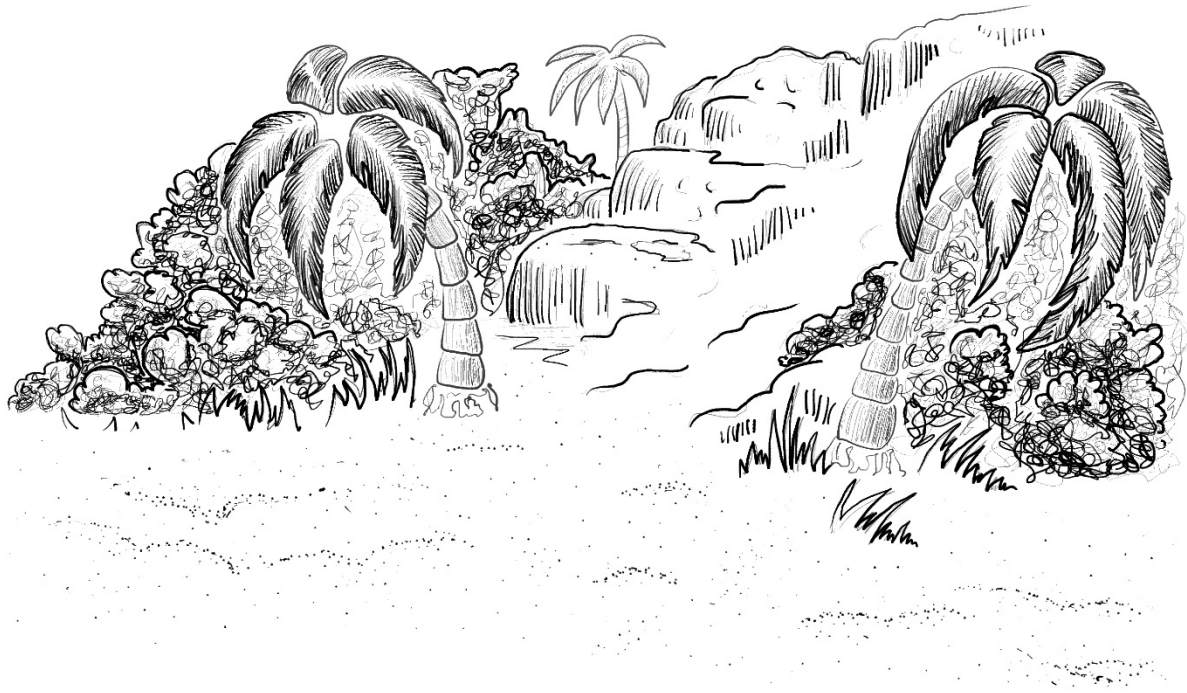
CRASH!

Impact!

The raft hits land.

The kids smash into the sand.





CHAPTER 5

THE ISLAND

The kids gasp and grip handfuls of sand. They did crash, but they are on the island at last. They drag the raft up into the grass.

The island is hushed and still.

It's just a big hill of plants and sand.

"It's an uninhabited island," Landin says.

"What's *un-in-hab-it-ed*?" Zack asks.

"Uninhabited: No people," Landin says.

Zack bit his lip. "No Cap'n Jack? No Mom and Dad?"

Astrid grabs his hand. "Don't panic. Mom and Dad will see the ship is lost, and they will hunt for us. This is Picnic Island. They will spot us!"

But Jazz scans the map. "No ... this *isn't* Picnic Island."

"What???" Landin grabs the map.

Jazz jabs at the map, then at the land where they sit. "See that big sand-spit? We didn't land on Picnic Island. This is *Bandit* Island."

"Bandit Island?!" The kids gasp.

"Are there Bandits on Bandit Island?" Zack asks.

"No..." Astrid says. "Just in the past."

"But will Mom and Dad hunt for us on Bandit Island?" Finn asks.

"Will Mom and Dad get us today?" Kass adds.

Astrid bit her lip. "Not today. They will get on a ship and check Picnic Island. And with six islands to check ... well, they may not get to us for days."

"We need a plan," says Jazz. "We need snacks and fresh water and a spot to nap."

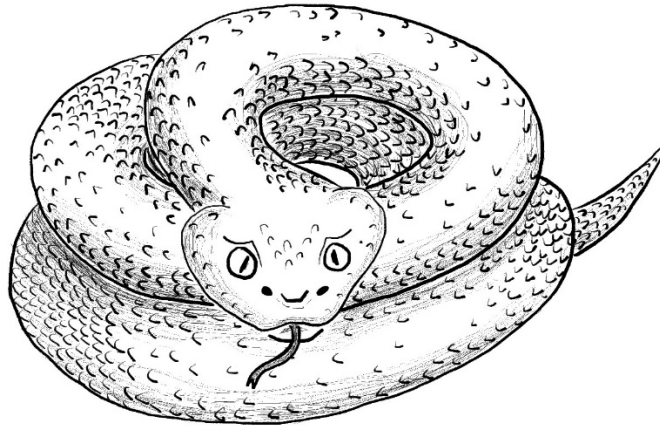
"Yes! That's it! I need water!" Zack says.

"I need water," Kass says.

“WE need water,” says Jazz.
But no water is in the bag. It spilled on the ship.

“Let’s just go up this hill and see if there is freshwater,” Landin says.
The kids tramp up the hill in the sun. They zig-zag up and up and up.
“This is big,” Finn pants at last.
“This isn’t a hill! It’s a cliff!” Astrid gasps.
“It *is* a bit big,” Landin admits. “But we need water.”

The kids tramp on and on. Up and up.
The sand shifts and the kids slip and trip.
They get to a big gap.
“We can’t cross.” says Astrid.
“We have to backtrack.” Jazz says.
They tramp down, down, down and then up, up, up.
“I can’t go up!” Kass gasps.
But then, at last, they see a big pit. And down in the pit is fresh water!
“Water!” they yell, and dash down to it.



CHAPTER 6

AN ASP AT THE WATER PIT

They zip down the track to the water in the pit.

HISSESSSS!

“STOP!” yells Landin. “It’s an asp!”

The kids slam to a stop.

“Get back! Get back! Get back from the asp!” Astrid yells.

“An asp? What’s that?” asks Zack.

“An asp is a snake,” says Astrid. “A bad, bad snake.”

Finn and Kass grab sticks, and brandish them at the asp.

“Don’t get bitten!” yells Jazz.

The twins jab the sticks in the sand and trap the asp.

“Quick!” they yell. “This trap will not last!”

The kids dash to the water.

Zack dips in his hands.

“No!” yells Jazz. “We need to test it! Let’s sniff it to see if it smells bad.”

The kids sniff at the water.

“Hmm ...” says Jazz. “I smell a whiff of ... well it smells a bit ...”

“Rotten,” says Kass.

Astrid’s grin slips. “Is it OK?”

Jazz grabs a rock from her pack. She dips it in the water.

PLOP! FIZZ! HISS!

“What is that fizz?” Kass asks.

“The water is acid,” Jazz says.

“Asssss-id?” Zack asks.

Landin slaps the water. “Yes. Asssid. *Acid*. The water is bad.”

“Can I just get a sip?” Zack asks.

“No,” Jazz says. “We can’t risk it.”

“Grrr!” Landin snaps.

“No water on this hill?” asks Finn.

“No water,” admits Astrid.

“I have a plan,” says Jazz. She pats the plastic in her bag. “But we need to go back down.”

“Plans, plans, plans!” snaps Landin and stamps past.

“Well, we NEED plans,” Jazz snaps back.

“Well --” Landin says. But then, on the sea, he sees a ship. And there are people down on the sand.

“A ship!” the kids yell, and they run for the hill.

As they run, they yell and yell. “Hello! See us! See us! We are on the island!!!”

The kids stamp and jump. They run down, down, down.

But the people don’t see the kids.

The people hop back in the ship, and the ship zips off to the next island.

“NO!!!” the kids yell.

Landin stamps down the hill.

He zigs and zags and skids.

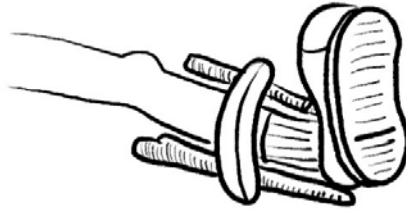
He runs a bit fast and then --

He trips and he slips.

He slips down, down, down the hill, and slams into a rock.

SMASH!

“Landin!” the kids yell.



CHAPTER 7

WATER AND A SPLINT

Landin gasps.

“Ack!!! I can’t stand. My leg. It’s twisted,” he says.

The kids slid down the sand to Landin.

“Kass, go grab a stick,” Astrid says.

Landin limps to a bit of grass.

“Just sit. We will strap a stick on you as a splint,” says Jazz.

“OK,” says Landin, and sits. They strap a stick on him.

“Will a splint fix his leg?” Zack asks.

“Well ... it will need days to fix,” Astrid admits.

“Will the people in the ship zip back? Will they see us? I need Mom and Dad!” sobs Zack.

Finn pats his hand.

“I can’t sit still,” Landin says. “I need to stand. We need water and snacks and to get that ship back!”

“No Landin, you will have to sit for today ... and the next day, and the next. It will need days to fix,” says Astrid.

“Grrr!!!” yells Landin. “I *can’t* just sit.”

“You can help with my water plan,” Jazz says, as she digs in her bag.

“Jazz and her plans,” Landin sniffs.

Jazz hands him the flat plastic from her bag.

“Just tack up this plastic with a stick into a tent,” she says. “Finn and Kass, can you grab water?”

“Water? What water?” the twins ask.

“Down next to the raft.”

“THAT water? Sea-water???! lck!”

“Don’t sip it! Just grab it in a shell,” Jazz says.

“OK ...” the twins dash to the sea-water and back.

The shell drips.

“OK,” Jazz says. “Set the shell in the plastic. And then tack the plastic up in a tent.”

“What *is* this?” asks Landin, as he tents up the plastic.

“It’s a *still*.”

“A still?”

“Yep. A still. See: the sun hits the water and it gets hot and mists into a gas. Then the mist hits the plastic tent and drips down. And THAT water you can sip!”

“You can have the water? It isn’t ick?” asks Zack.

“No! It isn’t bad,” grins Jazz.

“It’s fresh.”

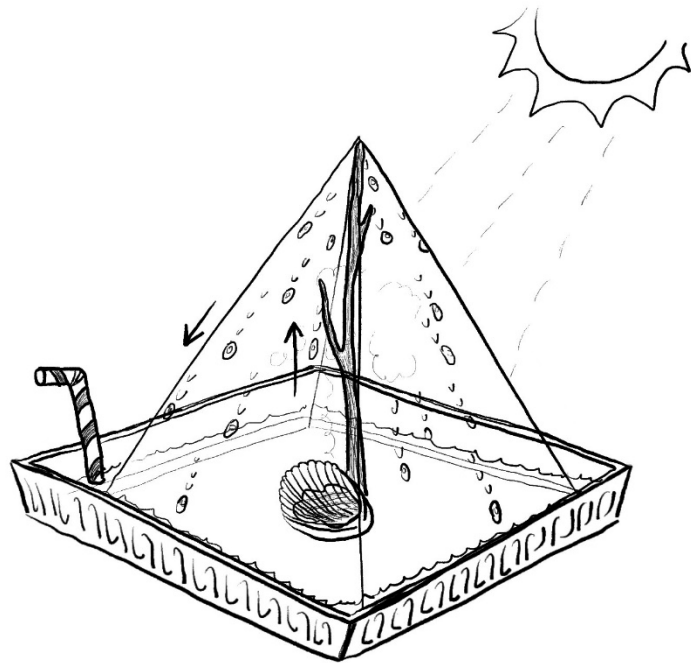
“A still.” Landin grins. “And we will have water to sip! That’s an OK trick, whiz kid.”

“It is,” says Astrid. “We just need a glass to catch it.”

“Yep, and for that I packed a big tin.” Jazz grins.

The kids clap.

Water at last.



Freshwater Still



CHAPTER 8

A DIFFERENT SORT OF PICNIC

The kids sit next to Jazmin's water still.

"OK. We got fresh water," says Landin. "But we need --"

"A picnic!" yells Zack.

"Yes! We need a snack. I am famished!" says Kass

"Jazz, what's the plan?" Landin asks.

"Well, the sun will set," says Jazz. "We need to split up and see what plants there are on the island."

"OK," says Astrid. "Jazz with Finn. Zack with me. Kass, you see what's in the trees and scrub next to Landin."

"But don't snack on the plants you pick," Jazz adds. "They may have bad toxins. Just drag them back to me and we can check them."

"And you have a plan for that?" Landin asks.

"Yes!" Jazz digs into her bag and flaps a list of plants. "This list has plants that are OK to snack on!"

"OK, whiz kid." Landin grins.

The kids split up.

Zack and Astrid spot figs and mint.

Zack picks the mint. Astrid grabs a stick to tap the figs down from the tree.

Kass lifts a plant.

"Ack! It pricks!" she gasps.

"That's a blackcap plant!" yells Jazz.

"Is that bad?" Kass asks.

"No. Blackcaps are a yummy snack."

Kass grabs the blackcaps.

PLIP! PLIP! PLIP!

She fills her hat with blackcaps.

Jazz and Finn tramp up to a mess of plants.

Finn jabs at them with a stick. "What is this?"

Jazz slips down and pats a hand on them.

Then she digs. Finn sits and digs.

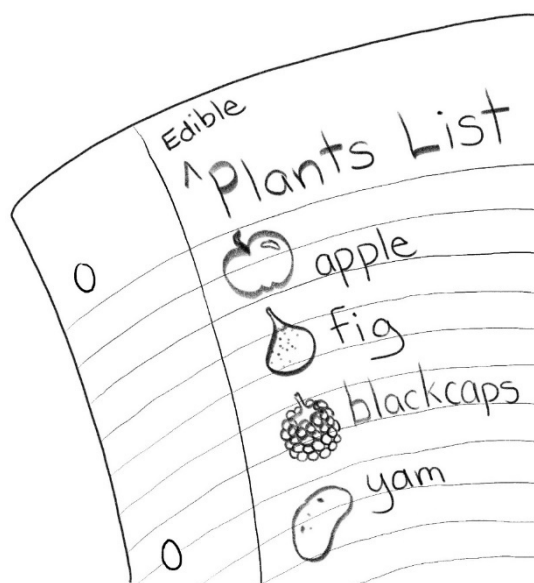
They clasp the plants and tug.

"Yams!" they yell, as yams and yams and yams lift up.

The kids tramp back to Landin and Kass.

Landin has the flint and a tin from Jazz' pack filled with sticks.

"It's a grill," he says.



Jazz cuts up the yams and sets them on the grill.
Astrid mashes the figs and mint into a jam.
The kids snack on blackcaps.
They dish jam onto the yams and dig in.
They sip water and fill up on yams and figs and blackcaps.

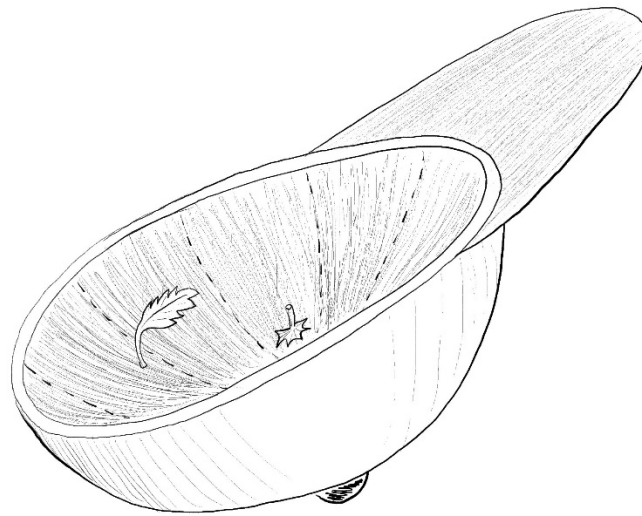
Mmmmm!

“At last! The picnic!” Zack grins.
When they have filled up, they pack
the rest into Kass’ hat.

But then the sun sets, and the sky
gets dim.
“Hmm. No ship today,” says Finn.
The kids sit snug in the sand to rest.
“No Mom and Dad,” Zack sobs, as
they go to bed.
“It’s OK.” says Astrid. “We just need
to rest a bit, Zack. Mom and Dad will
get us when the sun is up.”

But will they?





CHAPTER 9

SNACK BANDITS AND SAND DIGS

The next day, the kids get up with the sun and scan the water. But on the water, there are still no ships.

“I itch,” says Kass. “I have a rash.”

“It’s the sand,” says Astrid. “We need mats to rest on.”

“And I need a snack,” Finn says.

Kass grabs the hat with the snacks. “What???” she gasps. “The blackcaps and yams are not in my hat!”

The kids jump up. “What?!?” they yell.

“Is it the bandits??” Zack asks.

“Did bandits ransack the camp?”

The kids scan the sand, but there are no prints, no tracks.

“If it’s bandits, we need to go!” yells Zack. “Let’s go in the raft!”

“No, if it’s bandits, we need a trap!” Finn insists.

“Shh!” says Jazz.

“What is it?” asks Kass.

PLIP! FIZZI! PLIP!

“Is it rats?”

“Is it an asp?”

“Is it the bandits?”

“No, it’s next to that sand hill,” says Kass.

“Is it an anthill?”

The kids tramp down the sand. In the damp sand is the PLIP! FIZZI! PLIP!

“It’s IN the sand,” Finn yells.

“Bandits in the sand?”

Jazz dips her hand in the sand. “Dig!” she yells.

PLIP! FIZZI! PLIP!

“Dig! Dig! Dig!” Finn yells
The kids dig and dig.

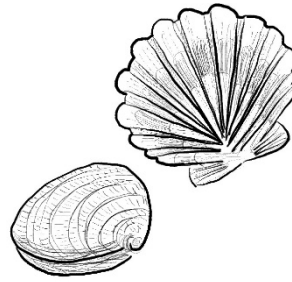
WHIZZ! SWISH!

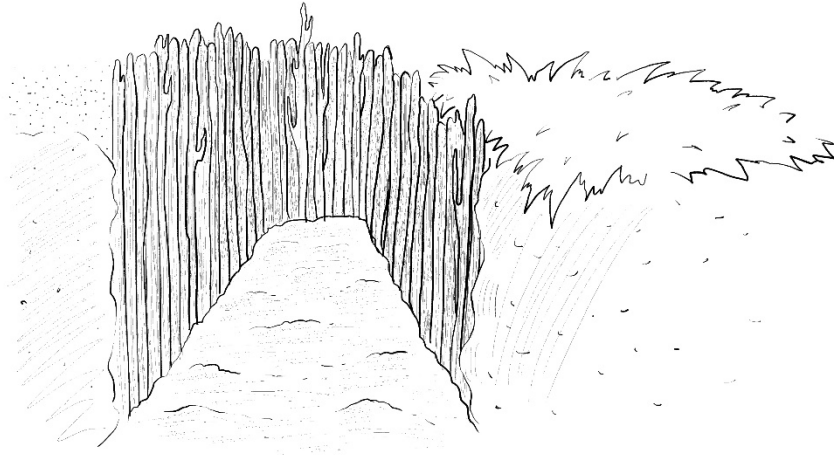
Sand flicks up.

PLIP! FIZZI! PLIP!

And then, at last, a bit of shell.
“There are clams in the sand!” Jazz yells.

“Mmmm. Clams,” says Astrid. “Grab them, and we will grill them.”
“Lunch!” grins Zack.





CHAPTER 10

PIT CAMP

“We need a camp,” Kass says as they snack on grilled clams. “When we slept, the wind got chill.”

“It’s a bad spot to nap,” Zack adds.

The kids munch on clams and figs.

“What if we dig a big pit?” says Astrid. “To stop the wind.”

“A big pit with an asp??” Zack asks.

“A pit for us, not for an asp!” Astrid grins.

“Yep, OK!” says Kass. “Let’s dig!”

Finn grins and digs into the sand.

The kids dig and dig and dig until it is a big, big pit.

Jazz and Astrid grab sticks, and hand them to Landin. Landin snaps the sticks and jams them into the sand pit.

“Yes. This will block the wind,” Jazz says. “And we need a mat.” She gets grass and plants and she and Finn twist up a mat. They set it on the sand in the pit.

“To stop the sand itch,” she says.

The wind whips the sand, but the kids sit snug in the pit.

As sun dips and dims, there is still no ship.

The kids rest and then at last, the kids slept.

They slept and slept.

PLIP! PLOP! DRIP!

PLOP! DRIP! PLIP!

As they nap, it drips and drips. The pit fills with water.

Jazz sits up.

“Ack! I am wet!” she yells.

“And I am wet!” yells Finn.

“lck! The pit is filled with water!!”

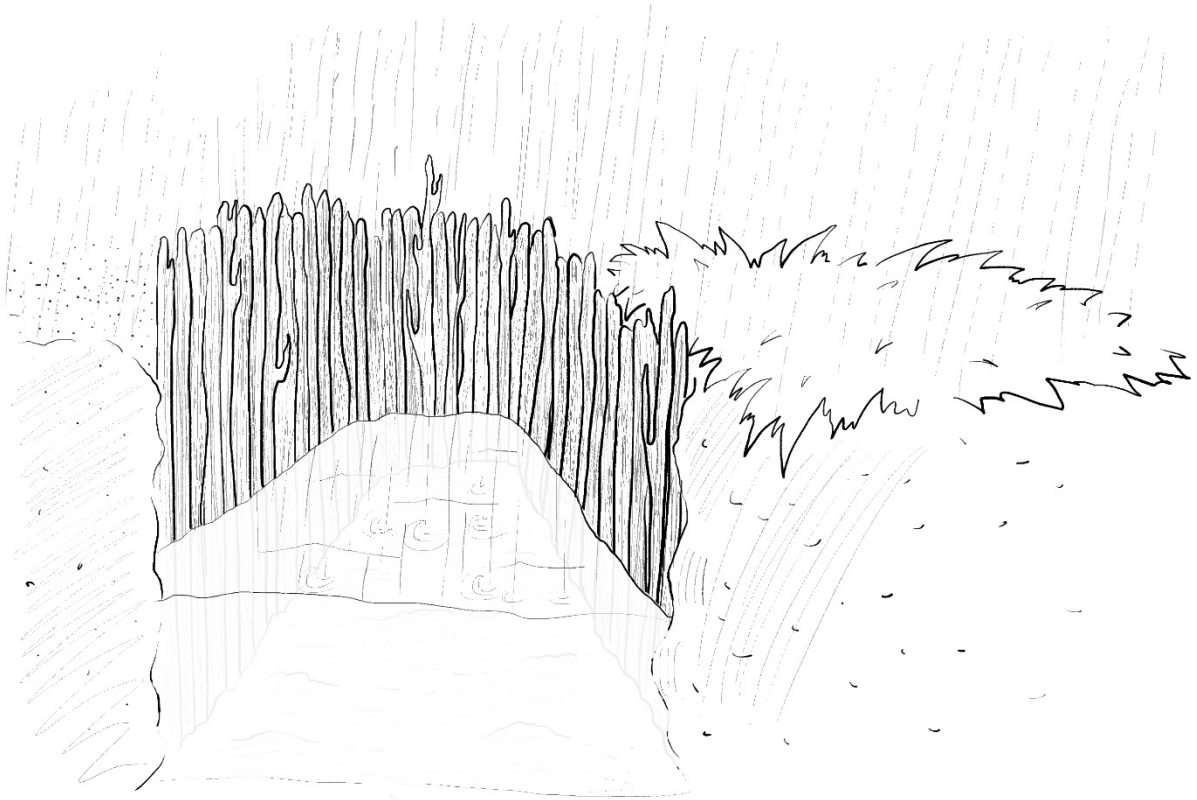
“lck! lck!”

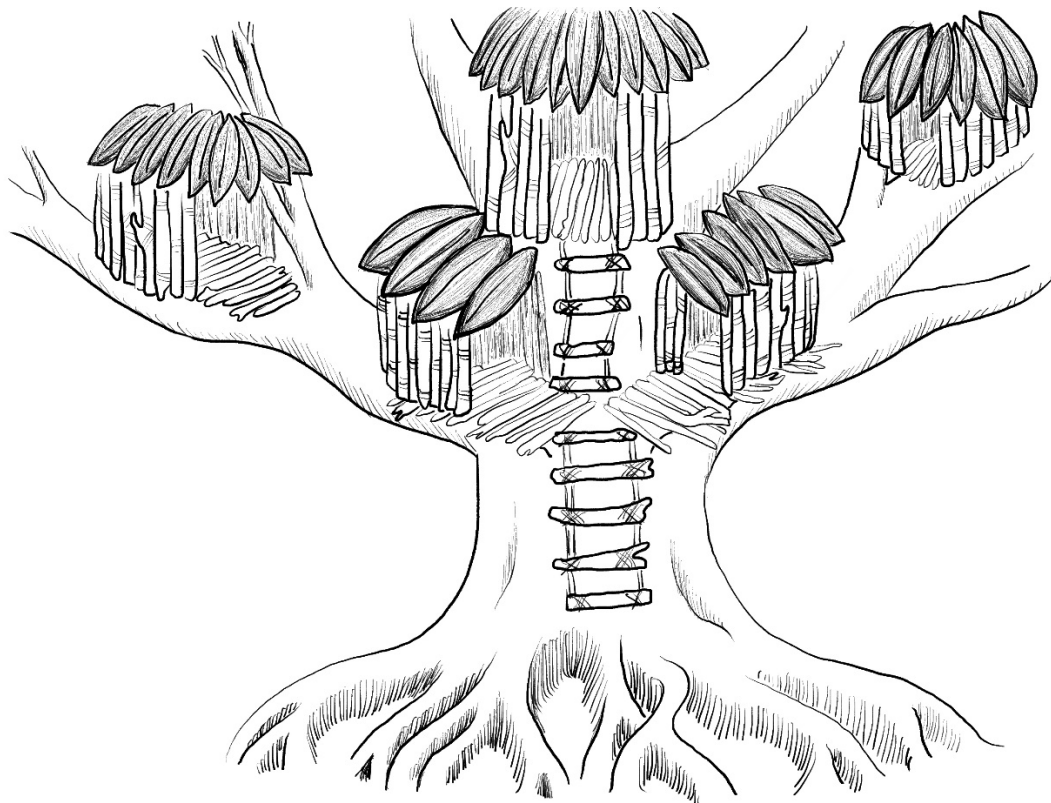
The pit is wet, wet, wet.

The kids dash to the raft. They lift the raft and prop it with a stick. Then they cram in and sit down on the sand.

“We need a new camp,” says Astrid.

“Yep. And not a wet pit,” says Zack.





CHAPTER 11

THE TREEHOUSE

The kids sit in the damp sand. They are wet and sad, and a bit mad.

“Ick! The sand nits bit me!” Kass slaps her hand.

“Yes. Sand ants and sand nits! I itch!” Finn says. “I can’t stand it.”

Landin kicks the sand. No pit. No camp. Just wet, itchy sand.

“I miss Mom and Dad,” Zack sobs.

“Ack! My hand sticks to this!” Astrid flaps the twig in her hand.

Jazz grabs it. “It’s sap from the twig!”

“OK ...” says Astrid. “And will that help us? Have you got a plan for that sap?”

Jazz stands. “We will see.”

She tramps to a big tree.

“We don’t need a *pit*,” Jazz says, and pats the tree. “We need sticks, and grass, and sap. *Lots* of sap.”

“Yes! We can camp in a tree!” Kass grins.

“Yesss!” yells Finn. “Tree-house! Wheel!”

“A tree-house camp,” says Landin. “That’s an OK plan, Jazz.”

Kass and Finn grab sticks. Astrid and Zack pick grass.

“Pass the twigs?” says Jazz

Jazz and Landin sit and twist the grass onto the sticks and twigs. Then they add sap.

“Lift this!” Jazz says to Astrid and the twins.

Astrid lifts the stick mat up onto a branch in the big fig tree.

The kids grab and stack and stick and twist and add to the tree-house.

Jazz grabs plants and drags them to Landin. "Here, let's rip this into strips and twist up soft grass mats."

The sun has set when the kids finish.

In the treehouse are six stick mats padded with soft grass.

The kids grill clams and dish up figs and blackcaps.

"Mmmm," says Kass.

When they finish, they stash the rest of the snacks in a bag next to the tree.

Kass lifts Zack up into the tree-house. Then Astrid and Finn and Jazz help Landin up.

It's not as chilly with the sticks to block the wind.

The grass mats are soft, but not as soft as a bed.

"I wish we had that fabric from the attic," Landin says.

The kids rest on the mats, and scan the black water for ships.

"No ships today," Zack says. "I am a bit sad."

"The people checked the island that day. When we went to the pit," says Kass. "But they didn't see us. Will they check back?"

"What if we signal a ship?" Jazz asks.

"Signal? We have no V.H.F. radio. And we can't yell."

"But we have a flint. We can set a big fire. If we set it up on the hill then ..."

"Yes!" Kass yells. "They may see it! And if they see the fire, they will zip to us on a ship!"

"OK," says Jazz. "The next day I will go back up that hill. And I will set a signal fire for Mom and Dad."



CHAPTER 12

THE BANDITS

The next day, the kids grab the bag of figs and blackcaps.
But the snacks are not there.

“The bandits grabbed the snacks!” Finn yells.

“No!!” Kass yells. “We need the snacks!”

“But see that?” Jazz says. She jabs at the sand. “It’s tracks!”

“Bandit tracks!” yells Zack.

In the sand is a set of prints. A path that zig-zags down to the water.
As if a bandit dragged the snacks.

“Let’s catch the bandits!” Zack yells.

The kids slip down to the rocks and into the water.

CLICK! CLICK! CLACK!

“Shhh!! What’s that?”

“It’s in the rocks!”

CLICK! CLACK! CLICK!

The kids scan the rocks.

Kass grabs a rock. “This rock is slick,” she says.

“But see! In the water!” Zack yells. He jabs at the water. Then, in his hand is a blackcap!

The water next to the rocks is filled with blackcaps and figs.

“What?” says Astrid. “But where are the bandits?”

CLICK CLACK!

The kids see a red flash.
“What’s that?”
“It’s crabs!” yells Jazz.

“The crabs grabbed the blackcaps and the figs!” Kass says.

“The crabs are the bandits!” gasps Jazz.

“Bandit crabs! Bandit crabs!” Zack yells.

“It’s not Bandit Island. It’s *Bandit Crab* Island!” grins Astrid.

“And crabs are yummy snacks!” Landin yells from the sand.
“Yes!” the kids yell.

The kids splash and grab for the crabs.

SPLASH! DASH! SPLASH!

The kids grab and grab, but they can’t get a crab.
“They are slick! I can’t catch them!” yells Finn.
“I wish we had that rabbit trap from the attic,” Landin says.
“I had it on my list,” says Jazz.
But they don’t have the rabbit trap from the attic.
They just have hands.

SPLASH! DASH! SPLASH!

At last, Jazz grabs a crab in her hands.
“Got it!” she yells.

PINCH! SPLASH!

The crab pinches Jazz. Jazz yelps and drops the crab.
“ACK!” she yells, and grabs her hand. “They pinch bad!”
She spins in the water and then...

CRASH! SPLASH!

Jazz trips on a rock.
The rock has a bad tip, and it cuts Jazz.

SLASH!



“Aaaaaaaah!” yells Jazz

Jazz is cut. She has a bad, bad gash on her leg. The skin is ripped, and the gash drips red.

“Quick!” Kass yells. “Grab some plants to strap to the gash!”

Astrid grabs Jazz. Finn grabs plants. They strap the plants to the gash on Jazz's leg. The plants get red. They add fresh plants to the gash.

"Press!" says Astrid.

Jazz jams the plants on her leg.

"Aaaaah!" yells Jazz.

The kids sit next to Jazz.

They sit and sit, and grab Jazz's hand.

At last Astrid says: "It is OK. But Jazz, you will need to rest."

"It's not OK," yells Jazz. "I need to help! I need to catch crabs. And I need to go up the hill to set the signal fire for the ship to see!"

"No," says Astrid. "Zack and I will catch crabs. And Kass and Finn can set the signal fire on the hill. You need to sit and rest with Landin."

Jazz sniffs and clasps her hands. But the gash on her leg is still bad. "OK," she says sadly. "The twins can set the signal fire."



CHAPTER 13

SIGNAL FIRE

Jazz packs her flint in a bag and hands her map to the twins.

“OK. So you need to go up to this bit.” Jazz taps a spot on the map, then jabs at the hill. “We need the fire up there so that Mom and Dad will see.”

“And you will have to add sticks to the fire so it doesn’t stop when the sun sets. You can’t rest in the tree-house. You will have to nap up there on the hill,” Landin adds.

“That’s OK,” says Kass.

“But will people see it?” Finn asks.

Jazz bit her lip. “I just wish we had a bit of glass to magnify the fire. In light-houses they set up a lamp and a big glass prism.”

“Oh ya. A light-house helps the ships so they don’t crash on the rocks,” Kass says.

“Yep.”

“But there are no light-houses on the island,” says Finn.

“No light-houses,” Jazz admits. “We will just set a fire. But *don’t* let the hill catch fire. Set rocks next to the fire to block it. And drag plants back so they don’t catch fire.”

“OK,” says Finn.

The twins set off the hill. They tramp up up up.

They tramp past tufts of grass, a finch on a branch, and slip past the hissing asp in the water pit. In the sand are tracks of ants and crabs and rats.

At last, the twins are at the top of the hill. They stand on the rocks as the wind whips.

“Brrr,” says Kass. “This wind is chill.”

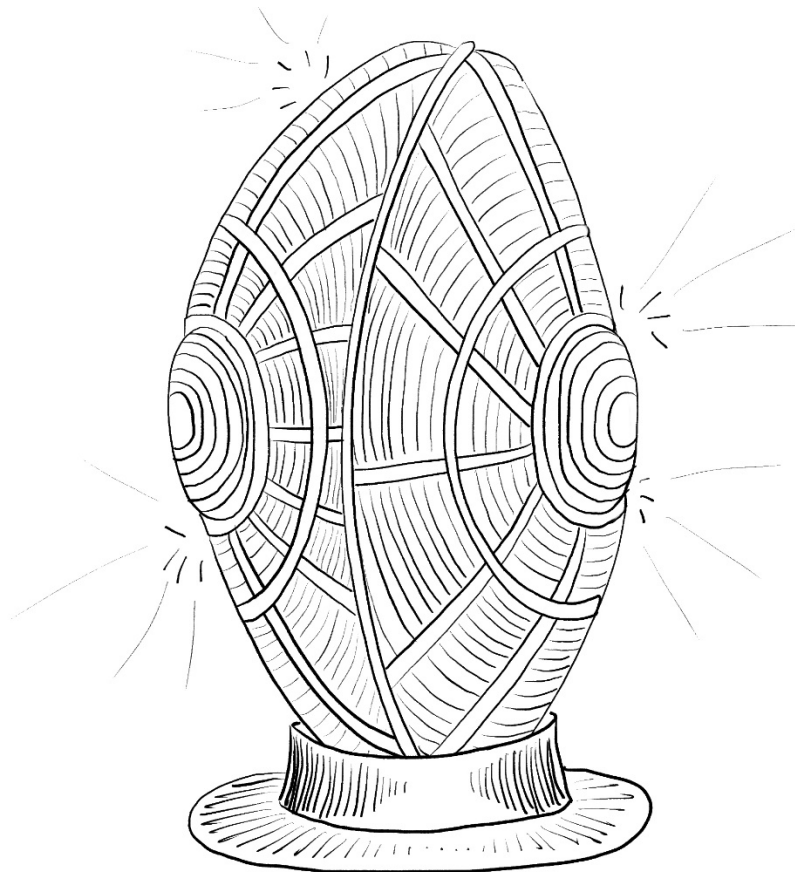
Then she spots an odd gap in the rock.

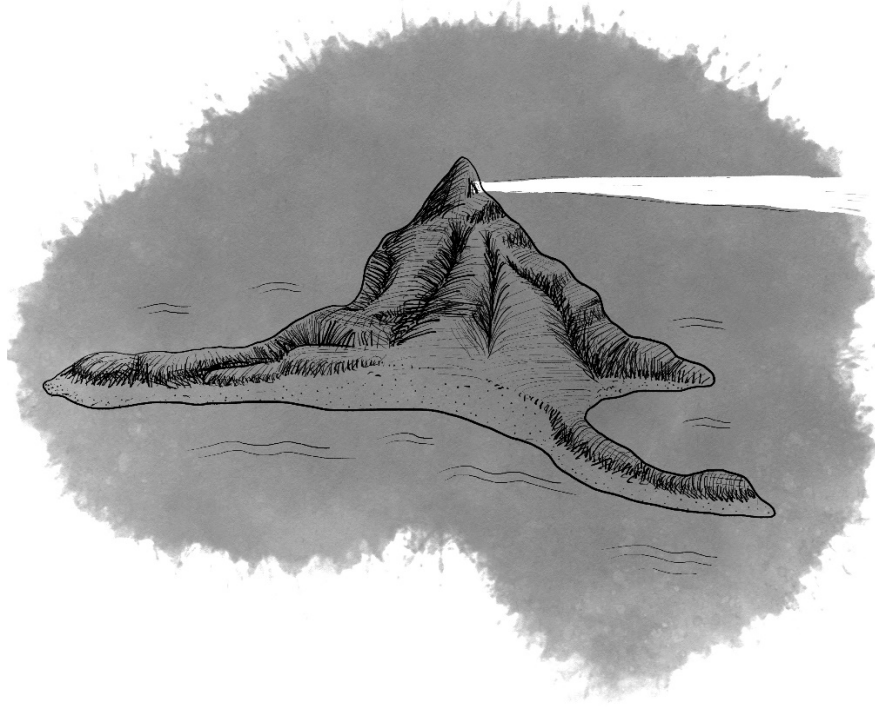
“Finn,” she says. “What is that crack in the rock?”
Finn spins to the rock. There, in the rock, is a black gap.
“Can we go in?” Finn asks.
“Yes, let’s.”

The twins cram past the rocks into the black gap.
It’s black, black, black.
And then ...
“What’s that?” Kass gasps.
There is a vivid flash.
In the gap is a big glass gem lit with the sun.
It is big. Much much bigger than the twins.

“What *is* this?” Finn asks.
Kass grins.

“It’s a light-house,” she says
“A light-house prism.”





CHAPTER 14

THE LIGHTHOUSE.

“But there’s no lamp,” says Finn, as they scan the light-house. They hunt and hunt, but there is no lamp.

“That’s OK,” says Kass. “Let’s see.” She jabs at the sky. “That is west. If we set the fire there, and the glass prism can catch it, Mom and Dad will see.”

The twins drag sticks and grass next to the big glass of the light-house. They stack rocks next to it. Then Kass hits the flint with a rock. The flint glints red. And then ...

“Yes! Fire!” says Finn.

The sun dips and dips down into the water. The sky dims. Kass and Finn add sticks and twigs to the fire as the sky gets black.

“Will Mom and Dad see it?” Finn asks.

“With the glass, it will help magnify it,” Kass says. She drags logs to the fire.

“I need a rest,” she says, and sits next to the rocks.

“We can’t rest,” Finn says. “We have to tend the fire.”

But Finn sits down. His chin nods.

“Just a quick catnap,” says Kass.

And then Finn and Kass nod off.

They nap and nap and nap.

When they get up, the fire is black!

“No! What if Mom and Dad didn’t see it?” Kass yells. “Quick! We need sticks!” They dash to grab sticks and logs. They hit the flint to get the fire back. Then they fan and flap.

“OK, OK. The fire is back,” Finn pants.
But did Mom and Dad see it?

The sun lifts up. It’s day.
Kass and Finn scan the water, but there’s no ship.
“No!” Kass says.
The twins sit.
“I am sad,” says Finn.

But then, on the water, a little black dot.
It zips across the water.
It zips and zips until it isn’t little. It’s big!

“A ship! A ship!” Finn and Kass yell.
They toss water on the fire and stamp it down.

HISSS!

They dash down the hill.
They run to the treehouse camp.

“A ship! A ship!” they yell.

The kids rush down the tree.
They dash to the sand.
On the water, a raft zips from the ship.

“Mom! Dad!” Zack yells.
The raft smacks into the sand.

Mom and Dad run to the kids.
“Kids!” they sob, as they crash into a big hug. “We hunted and checked Picnic Island lots and lots. But you are not on Picnic Island. You are on *this* island! And you are OK! You are OK.” Mom and Dad and the kids hug and hug.

With Mom and Dad is Cap’n Jack! His ship has a fresh mast.

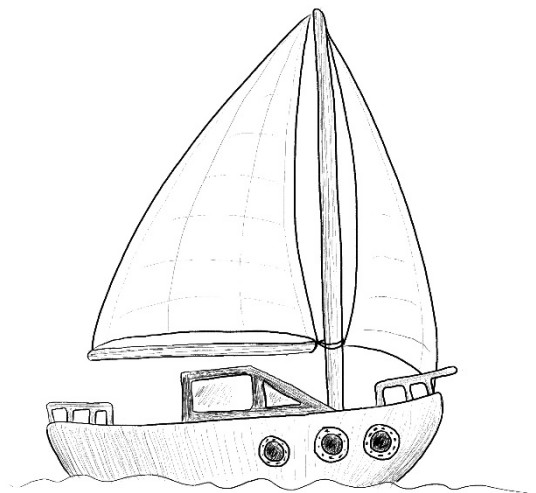
“I grabbed the raft you tossed, but I lost you in the storm,” says Cap’n Jack. He twists his cap. “And we checked this island.”

“Yes,” Landin says. “We yelled from up on the hill, but you didn’t see us.”

“But then,” Mom says, “Cap’n Jack spotted the fire and we set off quick.”

“Here, we have snacks and water for you,” says Dad.

“But see,” says Zack, “We made a still for water and got yams and blackcaps and clams for snacks. And see? That’s the treehouse we set up.”



“My, my, my,” says Mom, as the kids get in the raft, “You are whiz kids!”

“Mom,” says Zack, as they zip in the raft back to Cap’n Jack’s ship. “Can we go back to Bandit Island to visit?”

“For a picnic?” Mom asks

“Yes, for a picnic,” says Jazz.

“OK. A picnic on Bandit Island.” Mom grins. “But for today, let’s get you back to the house.”

And that’s just what they did.

THE END



STORY QUESTIONS

1. Where were the six kids going at the beginning of the story?
2. What happened? What was the problem?
3. How did the kids escape the water filled ship?
4. What island did they end up on?
5. Did they arrive on the island with food and water?
6. How did the kids get freshwater? What did they find to eat?
7. Who were the bandits?
8. How did the kids alert the adults that they were on Bandit Island?
9. How do you think the kids felt about being alone on the island?
10. If you had been on the island would you have done anything differently?

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