



A MISSING SISTER, A MAGICAL ISLAND  
AND...

A SPRINKLE  
OF SORCERY

EXTRACTS AND NOTES  
FOR KS2 TEACHERS  
MICHELLE HARRISON

## INTRODUCTION

**Suitable for:** Ages 8+

**Includes:** Extracts from the text + corresponding discussion questions and activities

**Themes:** Magic; Pirates; Myths and Legends; the Temptation of Treasure

## CONTENTS

### **EXTRACT 1: Magic (taken from Chapter Eight – Rusty Swindles)**

**Objectives:** Explore different examples of magic in the story; write and perform a song to ward away whispering wisps.

**Subjects:** Literacy: Creative Writing, Drama

### **EXTRACT 2: Pirates (taken from Chapter Sixteen – Dead or Alive)**

**Objectives:** Consider how the writer uses language to describe the pirates; design a pirate map leading you to the treasure.

**Subjects:** Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, Geography

### **EXTRACT 3: Myths and Legends (taken from Chapter Twenty-Two – The Raven)**

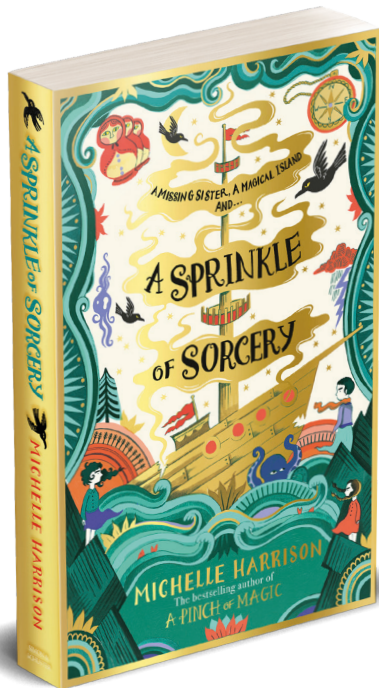
**Objectives:** Discuss the power of myths and legends; plan and create your own legend and share it with the class.

**Subjects:** Literacy, Creative Writing, Writing to Describe, RSHE, Citizenship, History

### **EXTRACT 4: The Temptation of Treasure (taken from Chapter Twenty-Eight – Treasure)**

**Objectives:** Reflect on the allure of ‘treasure’ and how we all desire different things; sketch and discuss the riches of your own treasure chest.

**Subjects:** Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, RSHE, Citizenship



## ABOUT THE BOOK

### **A missing sister, a secret island and ... a sprinkle of sorcery.**

The family curse has been lifted and the Widdershins sisters: Betty, Fliss and Charlie are free to leave the misty prison isle of Crowstone. But when a mysterious girl arrives at the Poacher's Pocket with a pocketful of hagstones and accompanied by a will-o'-the-wisp, it seems another adventure has landed on their doorstep. And when Charlie goes missing, it's up to Betty and Fliss to journey through misty marches, past wisp catchers and on to a secret island that doesn't exist on any map...

## EXTRACT 1: MAGIC (Taken from Chapter Eight – Rusty Swindles)

‘Always lucky, that’s us,’ said Fliss, sarcastic for once. ‘Anyway, you still haven’t said where we’ll be coming back from.’

Betty reached into the potato sack and removed the map she’d brought along: a roll of thick parchment with slightly tatty edges. She opened it out below the window in front of her, pinning its curling edges down with two stones Father had brought aboard as paperweights. It was similar to Willow’s map in that it showed Crowstone and the Sorrow Isles: Torment, Lament and Repent on a small scale in the lower right corner. Above it was the mainland, starting with Marshfoot and leading to Horseshoe Bay and beyond. But it was the area to the left that was of interest to Betty, in the expanse of water that, on Willow’s map, held the location of the mysterious hidden island.

On this map, the area below the secret island was where Betty’s finger trailed, where the first of two unusual landmarks lay. She tapped the parchment, eyeing Willow.

‘Know what this is?’

Willow stared at the map. ‘A shipwreck.’

‘Not just any shipwreck,’ said Betty. ‘The most famous one of all.’

Fliss’s eyes flew open again. ‘*The Sorcerer’s Compass?*’

‘That’s the one,’ said Betty. ‘Although infamous is probably a better word. And do you know who that ship belonged to?’

‘Rust ...’ Willow frowned. ‘Rusty ... ? The smuggler you mentioned earlier?’

‘Right,’ said Betty. ‘Rusty Swindles.’

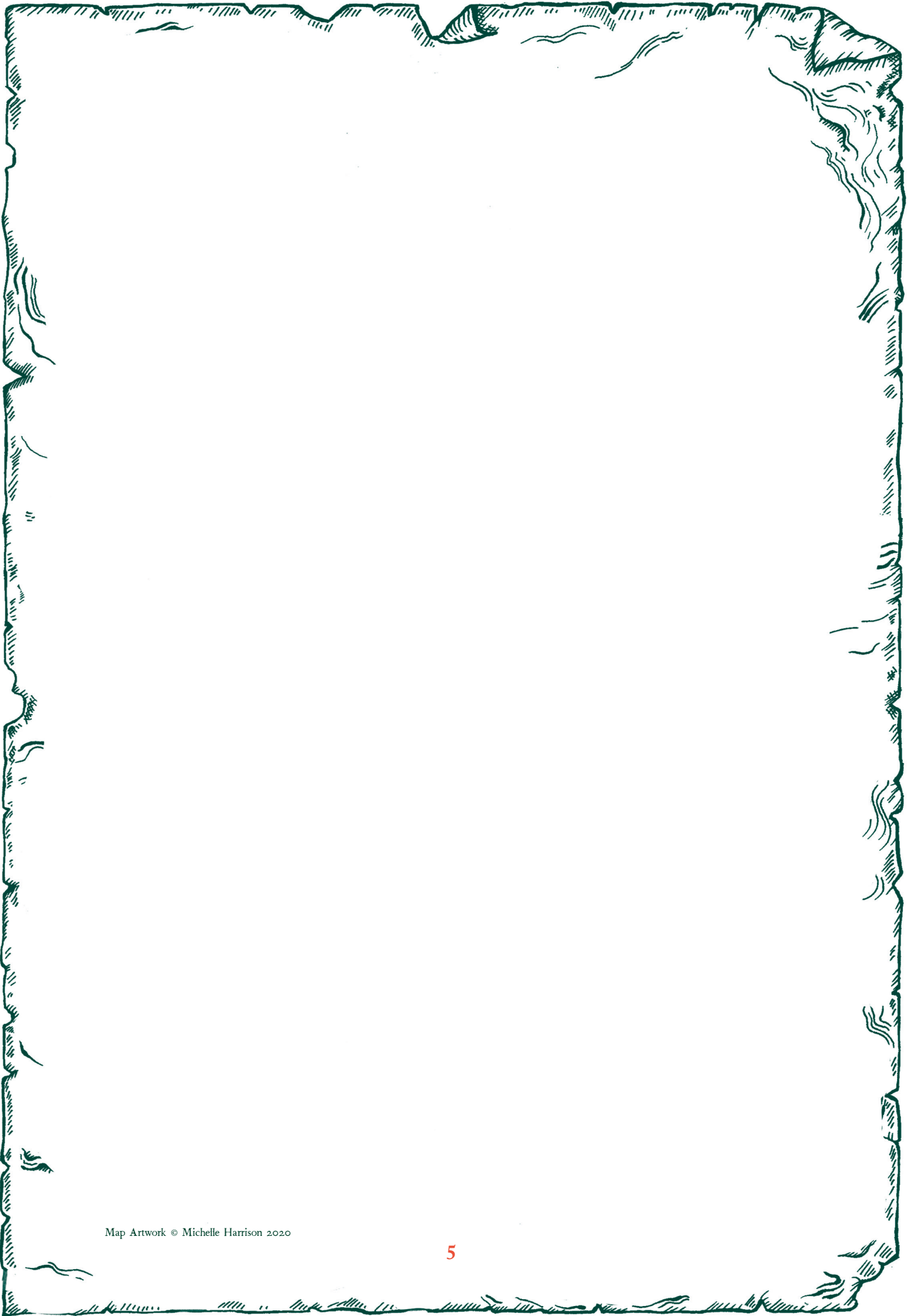
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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How does the title of the text link to the theme of magic? Do any of the writer’s previous stories also involve magic?
- What examples of magic are there in this extract? Can you think of other examples from the story?
- What magic can be found at the infamous shipwreck *The Sorcerer’s Compass*? Give examples.
- Why are the Widdershins sisters trying to get to ‘the mysterious hidden island’? Who are they trying to help?
- Can you think of other stories you have read that involve magic? What makes these books so exciting and interesting?

**ACTIVITY: THE WHISPERING WISPS** Subjects: Literacy: Creative Writing, Drama

- On page 122, Willow tells Fliss and Betty that a wisp is ‘a light that once a soul, waiting to be heard’. The girls learn that it is dangerous to listen to the whispers of wisps and that singing a song in the old tongue can keep them at bay.
- First of all, stain or design an A4 sheet of paper so that it looks like old parchment. Imagine that you are travelling on a journey when you are faced with wisps coming towards you. Draft the lyrics of a song to shut out the whispers of the wisps and keep you safe. Your song could include praying or asking for safe passage, ways of soothing or comforting the souls of the wisps, or tales of old magic to protect you from harm.
- When you are happy with your lyrics, write them onto your parchment paper and make any final adjustments like little rips around the edges, or scrunching it up a little to make it look as old as possible.
- Finally, get into pairs. One of you will be the wisp, and one of you will be the traveller. Take it in turns to act out a scene in which the whispering wisp floats towards the traveller on a boat. The traveller will nearly succumb to the wisp’s spell before reciting their song to ensure their safety. The wisp should get quieter and quieter until they eventually drift away.



## EXTRACT 2: PIRATES (Taken from Chapter Sixteen – Dead or Alive)

the vast bulk vanishing into the water. Approaching the Rusty Scuttlers' warning sign, she hooked her fingers into a strip of torn rigging and began to climb up on to the side of the wreck. If she could get high enough, she'd be able to see across the other side to where Fliss and Willow were. Somehow, even though she knew the pirates wouldn't see them, she needed to reassure herself of this. By now, she could hear the rumble of voices from the other side of *The Sorcerer's Compass*.

What she hadn't thought of was the rush of water draining from her drenched clothes back into the sea. To Betty it sounded horribly loud, loud enough to give her away. She froze, waiting as the water slowed to a trickle. Carefully, she pulled her skirt up and began squeezing out the rest of the water. It ran down the sloping wooden sides of the wreck, thankfully without a sound.

She crawled up further. The ebony wood was hot and dry in the sun, warming her chilled body. She passed Spit's shirt, which had stopped steaming now, and paused at the edge where the mast and the crow's-nest were visible. The pirates' ship was close now, virtually alongside *The Travelling Bag*, though it kept a safe distance from the rocks that had brought disaster to *The Sorcerer's Compass*. Like the wrecked ship, the Rusty Scuttlers' ship was huge, dwarfing the Widdershins' little boat in comparison.

Betty's heart skittered as she took in the figures on deck, swarming below the red sails. There had to be twenty or so

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of them – and there would be more below decks. Already she saw a rowing boat being lowered into the water, with three people aboard. The two who were rowing were young men, with strong but lean limbs. The third passenger was a woman who stood at the bow, looking through a spyglass. Straight away, every nerve of Betty's jangled.

She wore a tan leather waistcoat that was the same colour as her skin. Her black hair had been shorn very short, but lengths of ribbon and rags had been tied into the roots and flowed behind her like a rainbow. A curved sword was sheathed at her waist, and a dagger was strapped to one of her boots, which were laced to her thigh. Jewels dripped from her wrists and throat. And Betty knew you'd have to be brave, stupid or invincible to flaunt such riches.

One thing was certain: she didn't look stupid. This woman was not someone to be taken lightly. This was someone used to giving orders . . . and being obeyed. Strangest of all was the cat standing on her shoulder, looking perfectly at ease. It was white, except for its two front paws, which were as black as ink, and a black slash across its eyes like a robber's mask. It stiffened as the rowing boat glided through the water, its eyes fixed on the shipwreck. For a heart-stopping moment, it seemed to stare right at Betty, but then it blinked lazily and looked into the water, as if searching for fish.

Before Spit even opened his mouth, Betty knew how he would address this woman. He drew himself up straight, saluting obediently.

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How does the writer create an image of Ronia in the reader's mind? Give examples of interesting adjectives used.
- What words would you use to describe Ronia's character? What clues are given in her physical description.
- How did Spit end up with the pirates? How does he help Betty and her sisters?
- What else do you learn about the Rusty Scuttlers in the story? Why are they so dangerous? Explain your ideas.
- The pirates are described as a superstitious. What does this mean? How do the sisters use this to their advantage?

### ACTIVITY: 'X' MARKS THE SPOT! Subjects: Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, Geography

- Imagine that you are a pirate and are the captain of your crew! Design a 'Treasure Map' that will take you to riches beyond your wildest dreams. It's important to remember, though, this treasure will come at a price and your journey will not be easy.
- In one corner of the map, start off by completing a small sketch of your ship and give it a name. Then, start adding other places and sites to your map that you must either visit or navigate around in order to reach your prize. Your map might include:
  - Dangerous rocks or icebergs, known places in which sea monsters dwell, visible and/or hidden islands, Sites of shipwrecks, or other places of magic
- When you have added and named all the different parts of your map, make sure you mark an 'X' where the treasure lies, and draw a dotted line or arrows to show the route your crew will take to get there. Ships ahoy!



### EXTRACT 3: MYTH AND LEGEND (Taken from Chapter Twenty-Two – The Raven)

'Me too,' Charlie added at once.  
'Good!' The raven leaned into the cauldron bowl, using its beak to dig through the contents. 'Then you know what to do.'

Betty peered into the jumble of items. 'Take one, choose one,' she murmured.

'Take one, choose one?' Fliss frowned. 'Why are those words so familiar?'

'They're from the story,' Betty whispered. 'The Crowstone Chronicles, remember? The one-eyed witch, the raven and the three brothers. We spoke about it when we set out to find Charlie, because the Winking Witch made me think of that tale!'

She hesitated. There would be clues in the story – warnings when the brothers had failed before Hope succeeded – and perhaps these things could help them now. How safe was it to reveal as much in front of Ronia? But then, Betty reasoned, if Spit had heard the story, there was every chance Ronia had, too.

'So ... you're saying the one-eyed crone and the Winking Witch are the same thing? But ... that's just a legend,' Fliss burst out, shaking her head in disbelief. 'All those stories Father told us – they're fairy tales! Made up and passed down through the generations to entertain bored children.'

'Are they?' said Betty. 'That's what we've been brought up believing, Fliss. And maybe some of them were just made up ... but think about it! What if this one existed because it all really happened? Maybe not exactly the way it did in the story, but with some true parts and other bits that people made up.'

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'Or maybe it happened almost exactly as it did in the story,' said Willow, speaking up for the first time since they'd set foot on the Winking Witch. She still looked unwell, her eyes bright and feverish. Perhaps it was the oddness of the witch's crag and the talking raven, but Betty suddenly acknowledged the unsettling thought that it was becoming easier and easier to forget Willow was with them at all.

'So that means there really was a one-eyed witch here once,' said Betty. 'One who knew the way to the secret island and tricked greedy travellers with her magic. And, because the story never died, neither did she ...'

'She just took a different form,' Fliss said slowly, gazing at the witch rock.

'My father once told me magic goes where magic is,' said Willow quietly. 'It might change, or hide itself to look like something else, but it'll be there for ever. Even if it's only a trace. We don't always have to understand it. We just have to believe in it.'

'And now we have to ... to choose one of these things in the cauldron?' Charlie asked, peering into the stone bowl. She had been just a baby when Betty and Fliss had first become familiar with the tale, and didn't know it as well as they did.

'That's right,' said Betty, glancing at the raven. 'Just like the three brothers did.'

'Choose one,' the raven agreed, bobbing its head. 'Choose one.'

'And then you'll show us the way to the island?' Willow asked.

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#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do the words 'myth' and 'legend' mean? Why are they so important in the story? Explain your ideas.
- How or why do myths and legends get passed down according to Fliss?
- Why do the girls find it difficult to know which stories are real and which are not?
- Can you think of other examples of myths or legends that you have read about or heard of? Give examples.
- What do these myths or legends have in common? Do any of them involve magic?

#### ACTIVITY: 'X' MARKS THE SPOT! Subjects: Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, Geography

- In pairs, can you think of any myths and legends that you've already studied? Can you think of any myths and legends from different cultures? Can you think of any that have survived through history? Why do you think this is?
- As a class, discuss your favourite elements of the myths and legends in *A Sprinkle of Sorcery*. Can you remember any from *A Pinch of Magic*? Reflect on why myths and legends are such powerful stories. Why do they capture our imagination? What can they teach us? You are now going to use these ideas to help you to create your own legend!
- Start by filling in the 'Planning my Legend' worksheet, trying to come up with the most interesting ideas possible.
- When you have finished your plan, write up your story in best. Sit round together as a class and share your stories. Discuss what is exciting about each story. Were any parts of them scary? What elements were magical? Did everyone have a happy ending?
- Keep your legends safe as these can be used again as inspiration for a drawing or painting!

Artwork © Melissa Castrillón 2020



**Planning my Legend by :** .....

<p><b>Who is the hero of your story?</b> <b>What do they look like?</b> <b>How would you describe them?</b></p>	
<p><b>Where does your legend take place?</b> <b>What is it like? Is it in a mythical place?</b></p>	
<p><b>When does your legend take place?</b> <b>Did it happen a long time ago?</b></p>	
<p><b>Who else is in your story?</b> <b>Does your hero have any friends or enemies?</b></p>	
<p><b>What does your hero seek or want?</b> <b>What challenges do they face?</b></p>	
<p><b>What keeps your hero going?</b> <b>Who are they helping?</b> <b>Why do they want something?</b></p>	
<p><b>What magic is in your story?</b> <b>Is it good or bad?</b> <b>Is it a living thing or an object?</b></p>	
<p><b>How does your story end?</b> <b>Is it a happy ending?</b> <b>Does your hero get what they want?</b></p>	

## EXTRACT 4: THE TEMPTATION OF TREASURE (Taken from Chapter Twenty-Eight – Treasure)

'That's not what I see,' Fliss murmured.  
'Nor me.' Spit's expression was haunted. 'I see ... a family.'

'No, it's a staircase,' Fliss continued, a faraway look in her eyes. 'The one leading up from the cellar into the Poacher's Pocket.' She grabbed Charlie's hand. 'If we took it, it'd lead us home, I know it!'

'Ain't no staircase!' Charlie protested, licking her lips. 'That's sweets, that is!'

'Stop with your nonsense,' Ronia hissed. 'It's clear what's happening here.'

'Untold riches,' breathed Spit, pausing, his eyes wide. 'It was all true! Only everyone's ideas of riches are different. It's showing each of us what we want.'

'Well, only one of us will be leaving with them,' Ronia said viciously. She thrust a hand into the casket, and in that moment the maps Betty saw vanished. Golden coins and bright jewels tinkled through Ronia's fingers. She laughed delightedly, unearthing a firestone the size of a lump of coal, before plunging her arm in even deeper.

'What?' Charlie whispered, eyeing the glinting coins in confusion.

A strange expression crossed Spit's face, and Betty followed his gaze to Ronia, the captain he had so admired. She cackled like a magpie, her face contorting into something almost unrecognisable. As if the treasure itself had possessed her in every way.

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'It's huge, vast,' she crooned, admiring the casket like it was the crib of a longed-for child. 'Bigger and better than any chest we've ever found.'

'Yeah,' said Spit softly. 'And you want everything inside it for yourself, don't you? To heck with the Rusty Scuttlers.'

Smirking, Ronia dug her arm deeper into the tumbling coins. But then the smirk faltered, replaced by confusion. She withdrew her arm, and swung a foot into the chest, pushing down through the treasure. 'I – it must end somewhere ... It's—'

The coins gave way beneath her, as if a trapdoor had fallen open. Ronia screamed as she was sucked into the coins that were disappearing into the chest's hidden depths like quicksand. As her fighting arm flung out to save herself, her cutlass sliced silently into the sand.

Fliss swooped on it, but already Betty could see that Ronia was shoulder deep and in trouble. Gold spilled over gold, and gemstones crushed against each other, grinding like pepper in a mill.

'It's swallowing her!' Charlie yelled, wide-eyed in horror and fascination.

Instinctively, Spit grabbed Ronia's arm, his face pinched with shock.

'Spit, no!' Fliss shouted. 'It'll take you, too!'

'I can't let her die!' he cried. Coins flew up, hitting him in the face. One of them landed on the sand, rolling to a standstill to reveal it was nothing more than Willow's

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is greed? Have you ever felt or shown it? How does greed get the better of Ronia in this extract?
- How does the writer express Ronia's greed as a negative quality? Highlight key words.
- Which other characters in the story are taught a lesson about greed? Give examples.
- Which characters are rewarded for being selfless and kind? Explain your ideas.
- What other lessons or morals do you think are in the text? What do you think lies ahead for Fliss, Betty, and Charlie?

### ACTIVITY: UNTOLD RICHES Subjects: Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, RSHE, Citizenship

- When the group finally reach the treasure chest of 'untold riches' on pages 344–345, Spit realises that 'everyone's ideas of riches are different' and each of them see something specific to them when they look in the chest. Thinking back to these pages, can you remember what each character sees? What does this tell us about greed and what motivates people?
- Close your eyes and imagine that you have finally reached the treasure chest you were searching for with your 'Treasure Map' in Lesson 2. What would you see upon opening the chest? Think about how you would feel after such a long and treacherous journey. What sorts of things would you be greedy for? Would you see just one thing or a few things in the chest?
- Sketch an image of what you would see on the 'Treasure Chest' worksheet. Try to make your sketch as detailed as possible so that like Ronia, you would find it hard to resist the contents of the chest!

- On the count of 3, hold up your sketches and catch a glimpse of what your classmates see in the chest. Finally, discuss why you have chosen this treasure and why it would be hard to resist. What qualities do we need to overcome greed and desire?

