

ELISA PURICELLI GUERRA



Minerva e Mint



THE LEGEND OF
BLACK BART

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN,
YOU JUST HAVE TO BELIEVE!



*Minerva
Mint*

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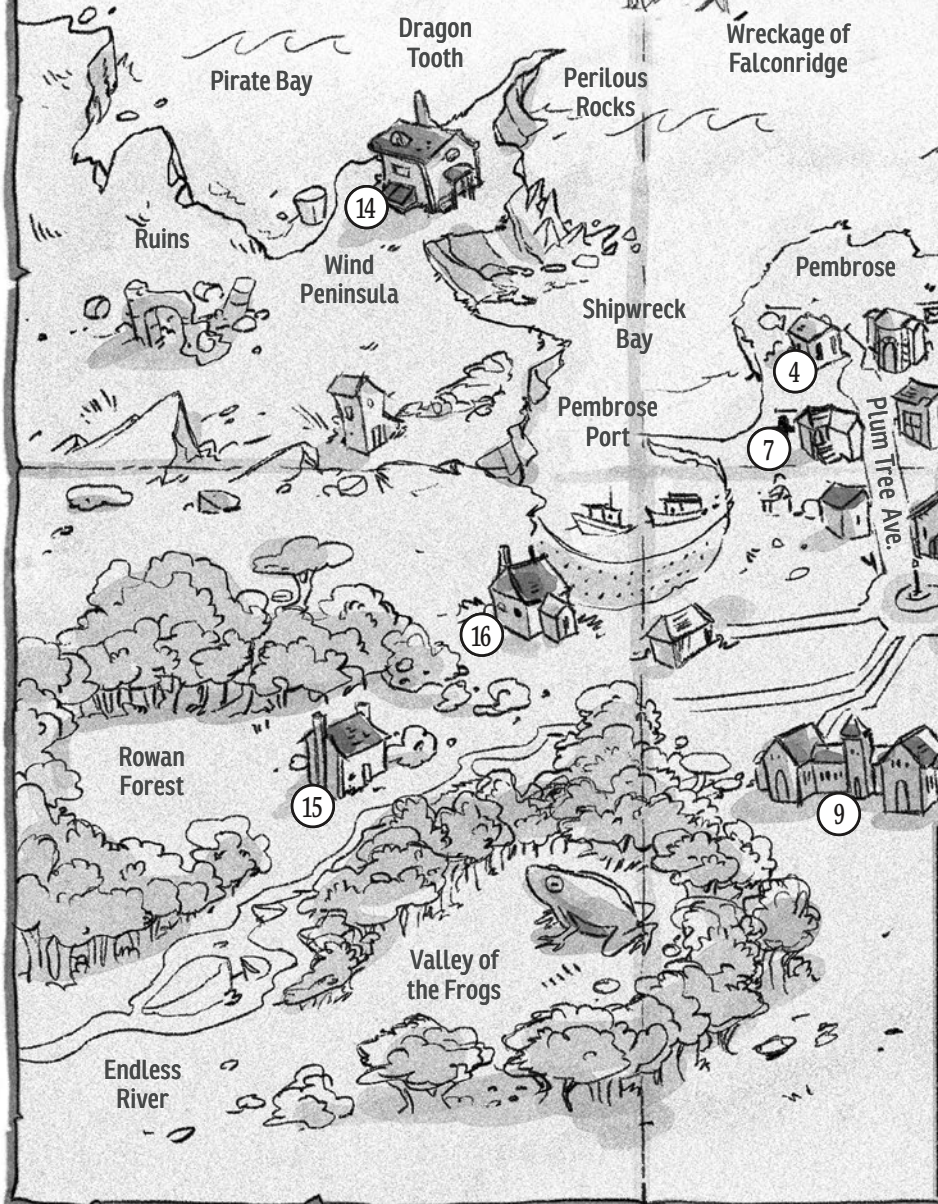
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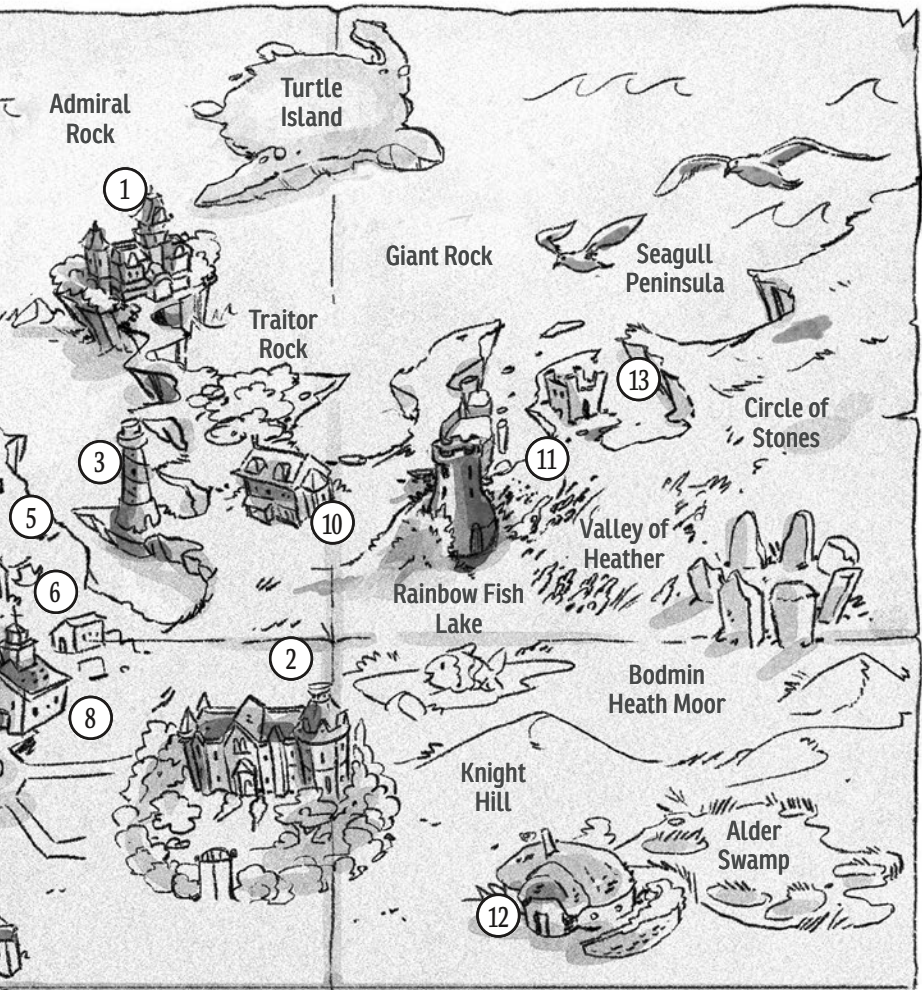
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16. Fisherman Circle



CHAPTER 1



THE PERFECT TRAP

Ding! Ding! Ding! A bell went off furiously.

“Get me down right now!” yelled Ravi. “You know I don’t like to be up this high!”

He dangled upside down from a tree branch, his face just a few feet from the ground. The only thing keeping him from hitting the dirt was the tip of his foot.

“Hurray, it worked!” yelled Minerva.

Ravi frowned. He didn’t share his friend’s excited excitement. Actually, he was pretty upset. He said his name and grumbled, “So, will you get me down?”



“I told you it would work,” said Thomasina, ignoring him. She showed Minerva the book she was holding and pointed at a page. “It’s exactly like the picture, don’t you think, Minerva?”

“Hey! I’m starting to feel sick. I’m warning you,” Ravi said.

Minerva peeked at the page. “Hmmm.... it really is identical,” she agreed. “But in the picture, the victim is suspended over a hole full of poisonous snakes.”

“Unfortunately, there are no poisonous snakes in Cornwall,” said Thomasina with a sigh.

Enough is enough! thought Ravi. “That’s it! I’ve had enough of this!” he yelled. “The trap works. Now get me down!”

The girls looked at each other.

“What do you say? Should we free him?” asked Thomasina.

“Well, if we don’t do it, he’ll end up staying there forever,” said Minerva, looking around.

There was absolutely no one else who could help him. They were in Bodmin Heath Moor, the wildest and most isolated place in Cornwall.

Across the horizon, all the yellow dust was white holes covered with patches that and bushes with yellow flowers. The wind was so strong it seemed like it was trying to sweep everything away until only gray boulders remained. There were few paths and no homes, only ruins and an abandoned mine. The only things that lived there were some sheep and wild ponies, along with ducks, migratory birds, and frogs.

“The two of you, stop talking and get me down!” yelled Ravi, twisting and turning like a fish.

“Not if you use that rude tone,” said Thomasina.

Ravi shot her a mean look. All those two did was argue. A few days ago, Thomasina had had this crazy idea to build all the traps she could find in her favorite adventure books. “We have to protect our hideout,” she had said. Ravi thought it was a good idea at first, but he didn’t realize that he would have to test every single trap.

Actually, they had let fate decide. For each trap, Thomasina had held three blades of grass in her fist,

before falling to the ground. Luckily, a big heather bush softened the fall. "You did that on purpose!" he yelled angrily as he stood up. "You did that on purpose!" he yelled angrily as he stood up. Thomasina straightened her shoulders stubbornly. "I thought you wanted to be freed," she said.

"How about a snack?" Minerva suggested before they *really* started to fight.

The countryside air and exercise had made them so hungry that Minerva's suggestion had a magical outcome: their squabbling stopped.

Before heading back for something to eat, they put the rope back where it was and tied a bell on it. Then they fixed it to the ground with a release mechanism that would go off if someone walked off that happened, they would have captured a potential intruder!

They **started** towards their hideout, the round tower that peeked out over the first hill. It was called Owl Tower, maybe because of the engraved owl with big, round eyes on top of the entrance door.