

ELISA PURICELLI GUERRA



Minerva e Mint



THE NIGHT OF THE
BLUE TURTLES

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN,
YOU JUST HAVE TO BELIEVE!



*Minerva
Mint*

Raintree is an imprint of Capstone Global Library Limited, a company incorporated in England and Wales having its registered office at 7 Pilgrim Street, London, EC4V 6LB – Registered company number: 6695582

www.raintree.co.uk

myorders@raintree.co.uk

All names, characters, and related indicia contained in this book, copyright of Atlantyca Dreamfarm s.r.l., are exclusively licensed to Atlantyca S.p.A. in their original version. Their translated and / or adapted versions are property of Atlantyca S.p.A. All rights reserved.

© 2013 Atlantyca Dreamfarm s.r.l., Italy

© 2015 for this book in English language – Raintree

Editorial project by Atlantyca Dreamfarm S.r.l.

Text by Elisa Puricelli Guerra

Illustrations by Gabo León Bernstein

Translation by Marco Zeni

Original edition published by Edizioni Piemme S.p.A., Italy

Original title: La notte delle tartarughe azzurre

International Rights © Atlantyca S.p.A., via Leopardi 8 – 20123 Milano – Italia —
foreignrights@atlantyca.it — www.atlantyca.com

No part of this book may be stored, reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright holder. For information address Atlantyca S.p.A.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A full catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978 1 4747 0440 3

19 18 17 16 15

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Designer: Rick Korab

Printed and bound in China.



THE NIGHT OF THE BLUE TURTLES

Written by Elisa Puricelli Guerra
Illustrated by Gabo León Bernstein

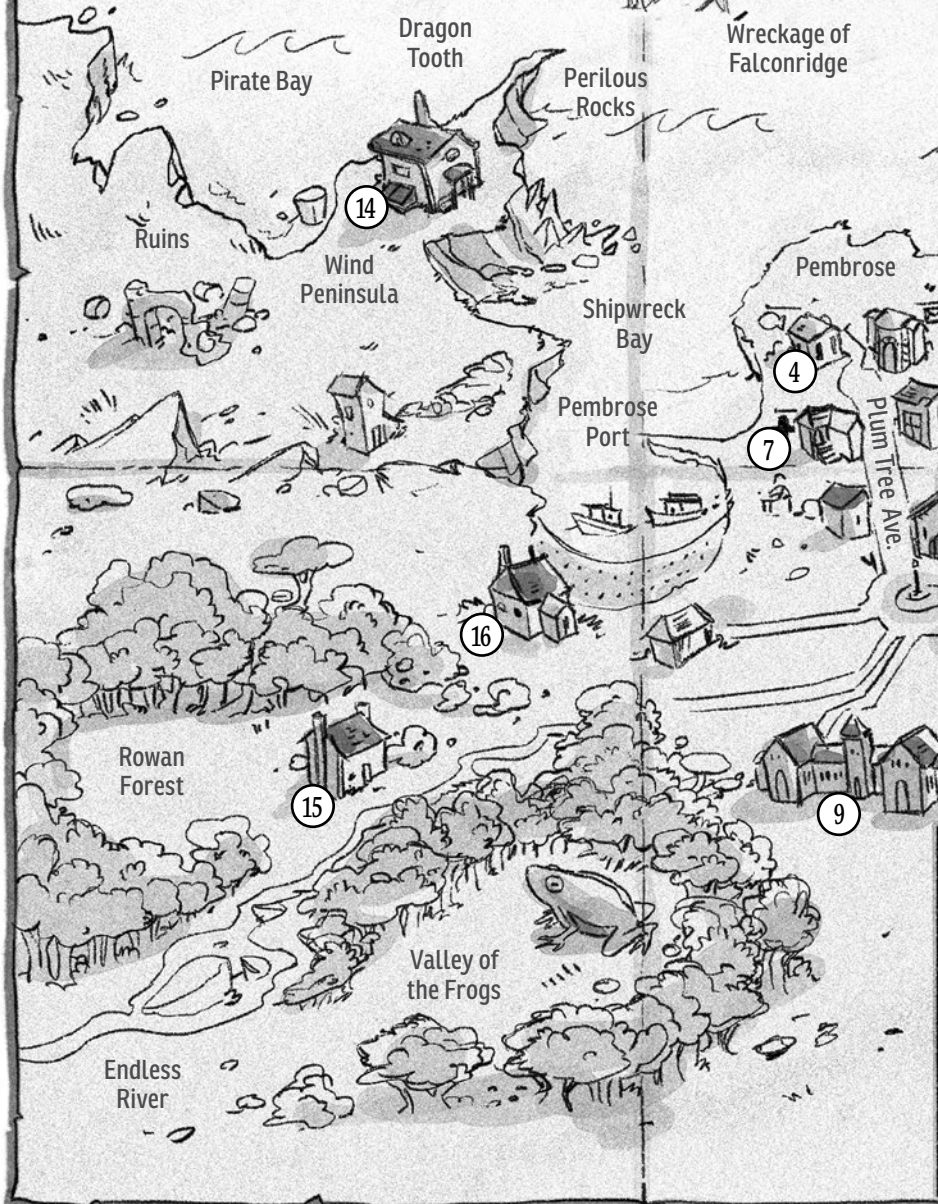


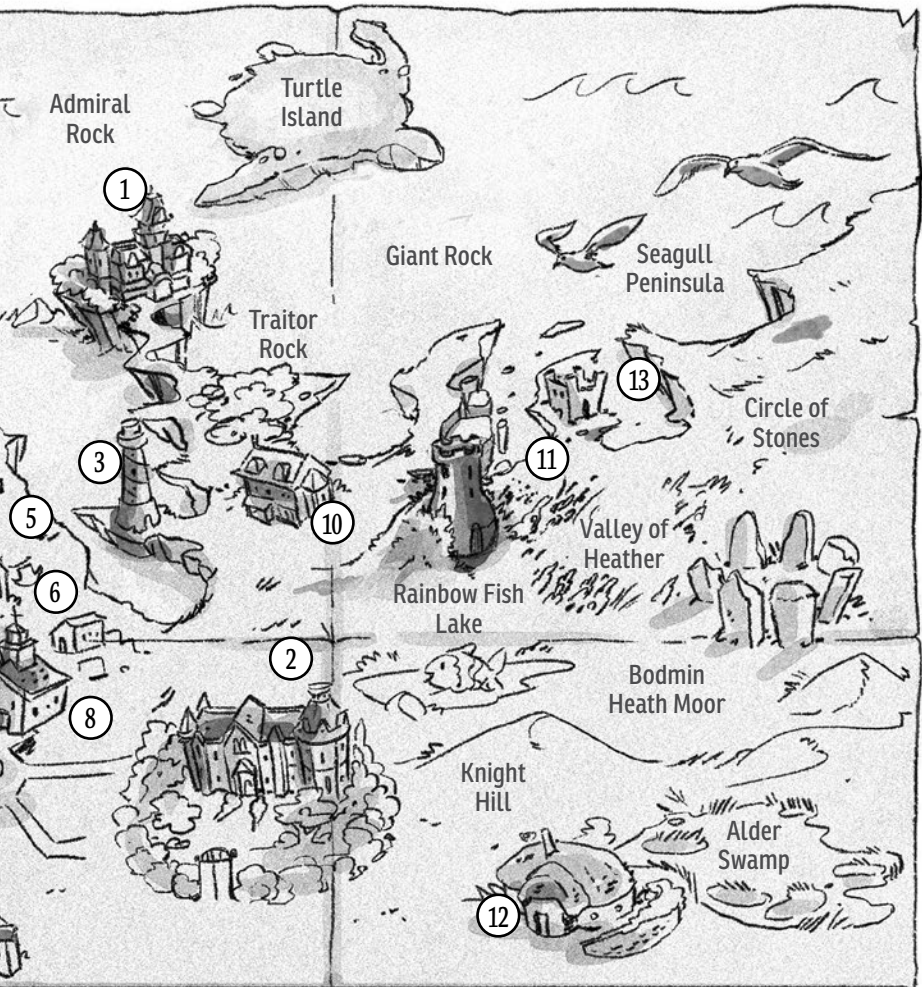
CONTENTS



WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR.....	8
CHAPTER 1	
A SHAMEFUL SHIPWRECK.....	11
CHAPTER 2	
THE MYSTERIOUS CABIN BOY	25
CHAPTER 3	
TURTLE ISLAND	39
CHAPTER 4	
A GOLDEN OMELETTE	57
CHAPTER 5	
SEA DOGS	69
CHAPTER 6	
FREE REPUBLIC OF THE TURTLES.....	77
CHAPTER 7	
LET'S BOARD!.....	97
CHAPTER 8	
SCARFACE COLEMAN	111
CHAPTER 9	
THE HIDDEN TREASURE.....	123
CHAPTER 10	
GENGHIS KHAN IN CORNWALL	137

Pembrose and its Surroundings





1. Lizard Manor

2. Crowley Hall

3. Smuggler's Den

4. Fishbone Inn

5. Post Office

6. Bon Ton Clothing Shop

7. Dr Gerald's Clinic

8. Church

9. School

10. Gilbert O'Sullivan's House

11. Owl Tower

12. Agatha's Cottage

13. Tintagel Castle

14. The Lone Pirate Inn

15. Old House of Sighs

16. Fisherman Circle



WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR...

Minerva Mint is a nine-year-old girl who lives in Lizard Manor, a rundown mansion atop Admiral Rock, in Cornwall, England, with fourteen snowy owls, six foxes and a badger called Hugo. She shares the house with Geraldine Flopps, an energetic custodian who found her in a suitcase at Victoria station in London when Minerva was just a baby.

Minerva is determined to find out what happened to her parents, but it is not an easy task. Very few hints were left in the bag with her: a volume from the Universal Encyclopedia, an envelope addressed to someone called Septimus Hodge, and the deed to the mansion in Cornwall. For nine years she has tried to solve the mystery by herself, but now she finally has help: her new friends Ravi and Thomasina.

Together, they have found a mysterious little box hidden in a kitchen wall in Lizard Manor. The box contains a small flute whose music can recall

hundreds of owls. The top of the box lid is engraved with a picture of a bell-shaped tower and the words Ordo Noctuae, which translates to "Order of the Owls". That's where the friends got the idea for the name of their secret club.

The Order of the Owls even has a headquarters, a tower identical to the one depicted on the little box. Their mission is to unravel the mystery of Minerva's origins. They have already discovered a thing or two: she descends from a pirate and a witch, the beautiful Althea who, before dying almost three hundred years ago, managed to hide a vast treasure. Althea left behind just one hint to find the treasure, passing it on to her newborn baby girl. The children know nothing about Althea's daughter – not even her name. Only by uncovering the mysterious daughter's identity will the Order of the Owls get to the treasure and, perhaps, to Minerva's parents...



CHAPTER 1



A SHAMEFUL SHIPWRECK

Ravi was floating in a turquoise world with his eyes just half open. Dozens of fish danced around him, little white cottages dotted the coastline and a gentle breeze blew from the southwest. They were the ideal conditions for a nap, and he was already surrendering to sleep, when he saw a...

“SHARK!” Ravi yelled, almost dropping an oar.

“No, it’s not, silly! It’s just a sunfish,” Thomasina said. She held a book about marine creatures on her lap. She had been studying the volume for a couple of days. “You see,” she began to lecture, pointing at

the fish, "it's almost round in shape and floats in the water in a vertical position to get rid of parasites. It may be mistaken for a shark when only its dorsal fin emerges above the water."



“Well, that’s exactly what happened. I saw the fin,” Ravi said. He reached out to where the fish was with an unsteady hand but then stopped.

“Are you sure it won’t bite?”

“It can’t. It has no teeth,” Thomasina replied.

“Come on, keep rowing!” Minerva urged him. “You had been doing so well before the, um, shark.”

She sat in front of Ravi, next to Thomasina, and was nearly completely covered by a huge life jacket.

They all wore life jackets whenever they went out in the *Althea*. While Minerva and Ravi looked like two human hot dogs in theirs, Thomasina managed to wear hers with her usual grace. She had even customized it with a colourful lace trim. In case of a shipwreck, she had also added a watertight pocket to protect her brand new bag. (She had lost the old one back in the City of the Ravagers.) Her bag contained everything they needed for a new adventure.

Ravi lowered the oars into the water and thought that being forced to row was outright slavery. Why did he always have to do all the hard work?

A couple of seals that had been lazing on a rock, dove into the water and followed the boat's wake as it glided past them.

Thomasina studied them and leafed through her book, looking for the right page. "Here it is ... harbour seal ... *mammal of the Pinnipedia family...*"

The two seals were much faster than them, and after a while, as if tired of moving at a snail's pace, they sprinted ahead and vanished from sight.

"Ravi, are you going to let even seals pass you now?" Thomasina said.

"Well, if you don't mind, I'm the captain, and I choose the speed we keep," he snapped back.

Thomasina raised a perfectly curved eyebrow. "If you can call it *speed...*"

"I'm going slowly so that you can read without getting seasick," he explained. He fell silent, hoping to have had the last word. *Besides, I have to concentrate on the oars,* he said to himself.

Minerva had taught him how to row, but he needed much more practice. He never managed to

go straight, and every now and then, the boat jerked ahead or stopped abruptly, like a toad with a bad case of the hiccups.

Ravi would not run out of chances to practise, though. After they had found the boat, Minerva, who had the blood of pirates and navigators flowing through her veins, had decided that they were going to use it every single day.

She had finally convinced her friend to go back into the water, but it had taken a lot of effort, including making Ravi the captain.

“You have to overcome your limitations and defeat your fear,” she had told him on the first day of rowing practice.

Ravi had to admit that rowing had helped him with his fear of water. Besides, sailing in a boat certainly had its moments...

Just like that one, when they tied the rope to a buoy off the coast of Pembrose, and he could put down the oars and enjoy a well-deserved rest.

He cleared his throat. “Ahem, because I’m the

captain,” he began in an authoritative tone, “I order that we have a snack!”

“Wow! You’re such a dictator!” Thomasina exclaimed, closing her book.

Ravi scowled at her. Why did she always have to use that sarcastic tone, especially as he had been madly in love with her since his first day at school in Pembrose? Besides, *she* was the real dictator!

Afraid that the usual squabble was about to break out, Minerva opened the basket that they kept in the bow. Empty stomachs increased the risk of fighting. “Who wants a cheese sandwich?” she asked.

“What else is in the basket?” asked Ravi, who would have preferred ten sandwiches.

“Lots of delicious things prepared by our French chef,” Thomasina answered. She lived on a fancy estate with dozens of servants. “For her cheese sandwiches, Chef uses only true Brie and Camembert cheeses, which we have delivered directly from Paris. Thank you,” she said, accepting the sandwich Minerva had handed her. “Did you know that