

GILL LEWIS



THE ISLAND VET

# Rescue at Seal Bay



Illustrated by  
IRINA  
AVGUSTINOVICH





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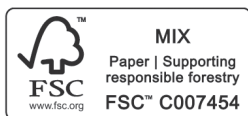
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*For the members of Cadw Ceibwr, for helping to give a voice to seals and other marine wildlife to ensure they have protection from disturbance, and for encouraging responsible tourism to allow the wild things to have the space they need*





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# Haven Islands

GANNET CRAG

WEST HAVEN

Lighthouse

Dolphin Cove

GULL HAVEN

Seal Bay

Eagle Crag

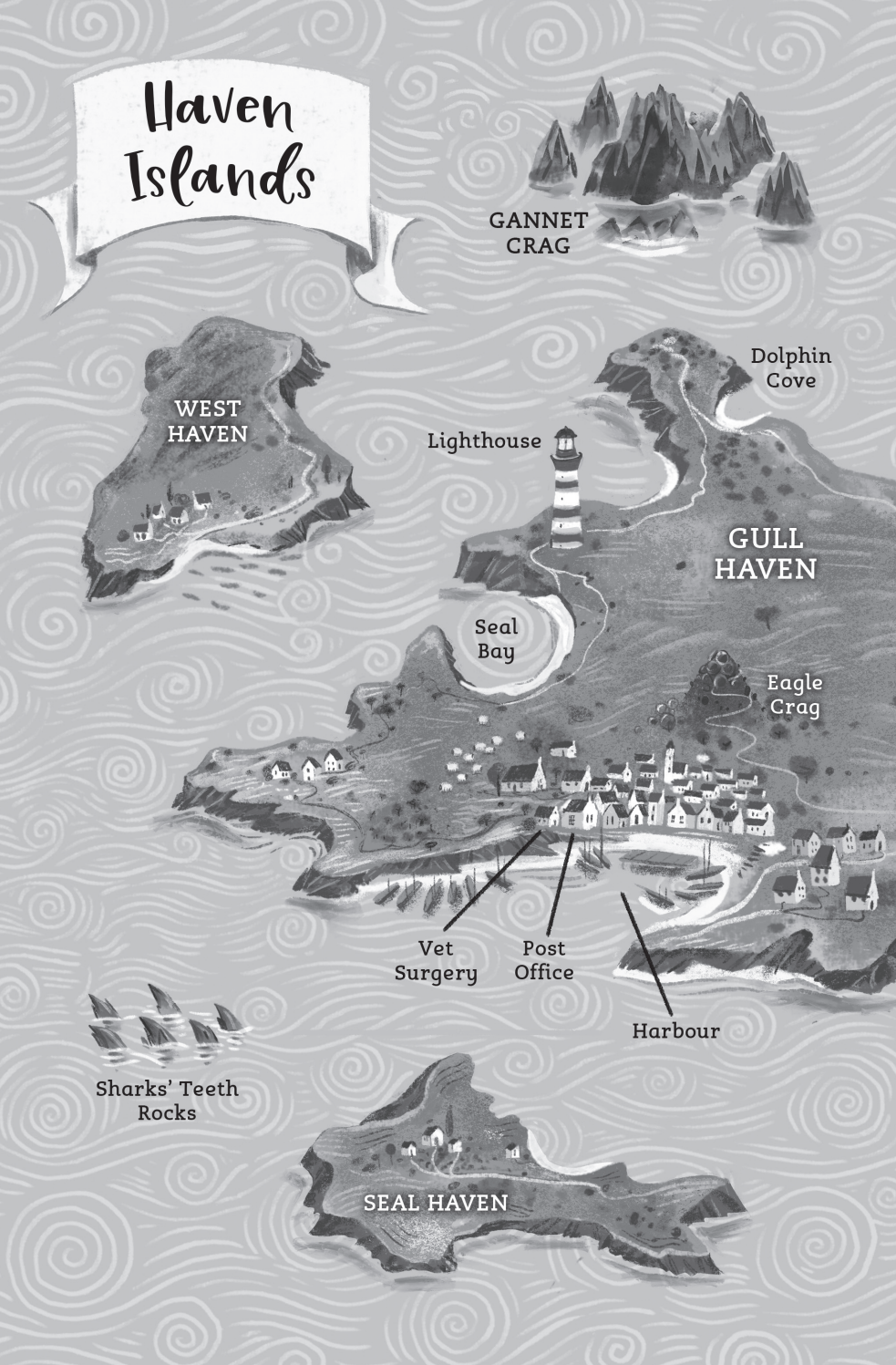
Vet Surgery

Post Office

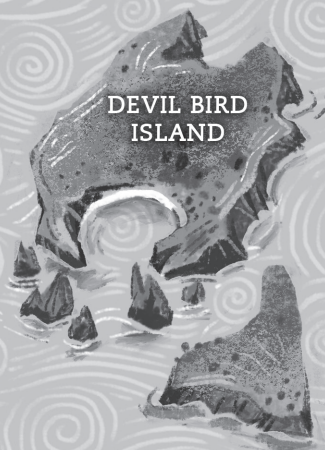
Harbour

Sharks' Teeth Rocks

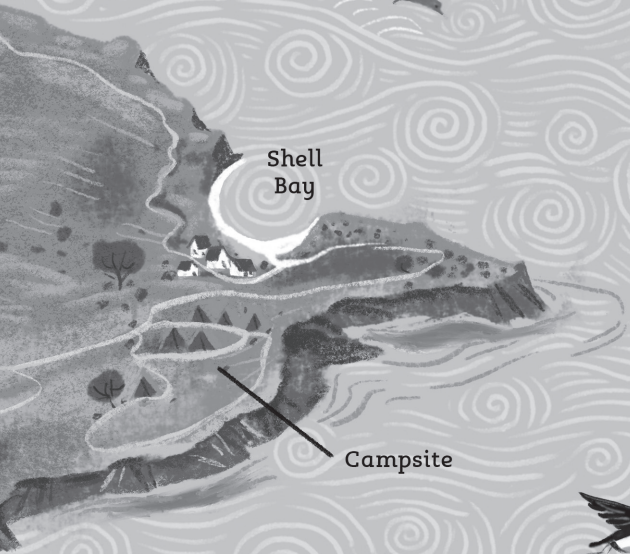
SEAL HAVEN



DEVIL BIRD  
ISLAND



Shell  
Bay



Campsite



EAST HAVEN







## CHAPTER 1

# Summer Holidays

Tia pushed open her bedroom window and grinned.

The sky was blue, the sun was shining and the sea glittered in the early morning light.

It was the first day of the school holidays and the long summer stretched out ahead of her. No more school for five whole weeks.

Tia picked up Pirate, her cat. Pirate was a white cat with a patch of black fur over one eye,

and only three legs. Tia had found her washed up on the beach and now she lived with Tia.

“We can do anything we want to do,” said Tia. “We can help Mum in the vet hospital and we can go to the beach every day.”

Tia and her mum lived on the Haven Islands and her mum was the island vet. Tia loved helping her mum to look after all the animals. They lived in a small flat above the vet hospital and Tia’s bedroom looked out over the sea.

“Come on, Pirate. Let’s go outside,” said Tia.

But Pirate wiggled free and jumped back onto the bed. She curled up on the warm duvet. It didn’t look like she wanted to go anywhere.

Tia sighed. “I’ll have to find Norman instead.”

Tia went downstairs and let herself out of the front door. Norman was sitting in the

sunshine outside the post office, waiting for her. He was a big shaggy dog with kind eyes and a very waggy tail. He belonged to Peggy, the post lady. Peggy was sitting in the sunshine too, with a cup of tea in her hands.

“Morning, Peggy. Morning, Norman,” said Tia.

“Morning,” said Peggy. “Have you had breakfast?”

“No time,” said Tia. “Norman and I are going to see the seals.”

Peggy put a warm bread roll in a paper bag. “Here, just in case you get hungry.”

“Thank you,” said Tia, and she and Norman set off. Her mum was at work already in the hospital car park, looking after a sick sheep. Tia waved to her and walked on towards the harbour. She waved to Ted the lifeboat man, who was cleaning his boat.



Bright coloured bunting was strung all around the harbour to welcome the holidaymakers who arrived every day on the ferry. Lots of tourists came to the islands in the summer and the money they spent in the





holidays was good for the people who lived there all year round.

The holidaymakers bought ice creams and postcards in the shop, they paid to camp



at the campsites, or stay in the hotels and holiday cottages, and they bought food at the restaurants and cafes.

The cafes and restaurants were always busy. But best of all, Toni opened his ice-cream parlour in the summer months. He had over thirty different flavours and Tia couldn't wait to try them all.

But it was too early in the morning for ice cream, so Tia set off along the coast path, walking up the steep track to the cliffs.

This was her favourite island path. She liked to walk to Seal Bay. It was a hidden cove where seals flopped out of the water and onto the sand to have their pups. The adult seals needed safe, quiet and sheltered beaches to look after their pups.

When Tia got to the cove, she looked down to see a large seal on the sand.

She held on to Norman's collar. "We won't go down to the beach," she said. "We don't want to scare her." So Tia sat with Norman, giving him some of her bread roll, and watched the seal from a safe distance. It was lying on its side, resting in the sun. It even seemed to have a happy smile on its face.

Tia smiled too. "I'd like to be a seal. You can swim all day and play in the waves and sleep on the sand."



“Woof!” said Norman, who thought seals looked a bit like sea-dogs.

“And seals are extra lucky because they don’t have to go to school,” she said.

Tia didn’t really mind school. In fact, she quite liked it. The school on the island was small – there were only seven pupils.

Their teacher, Miss Hollyhocks, was lovely, and she read them stories and took them for beach walks nearly every day. She loved animals too and Tia thought she was the best sort of teacher.

The only thing that Tia really missed was a friend the same age as her. Tia was in Year Four. There were two girls in Year Six. A boy in Year Five, and a boy and twin girls in Year One. It would be nice to have someone to play with and explore the islands, she often wished.

“Come on, Norman. Let’s get back,” she said.

As Tia walked along the harbour wall, she saw the ferry coming in, packed with holidaymakers. There were lots of happy, excited faces looking forward to their time on the islands. Tia leaned on the railings next to Ted the lifeboatman.

“It’s going to be busy,” said Tia.

Ted nodded. “People love coming here. We get all sorts of people on the island. Look, there’s Pete and Kaye Finn. They’re the owners of Pukka Paddleboards. They’ve just bought one of the holiday homes and they’re going to sell paddleboards here.”

Pete and Kaye Finn and their two young children were the first to walk down the gangplank. Tia couldn’t help thinking that they looked like they owned the islands. Pete wore sunglasses, a flashy gold watch, a crisp white shirt and pink flamingo Bermuda shorts. Kaye barked orders to everyone. She wanted their suitcases unloaded right away.

“They’re very rich,” said Ted. “I heard they’re multi-millionaires.”





*They look very rude*, thought Tia. She scratched Norman on the head and hoped she wouldn't have to meet the Finn family.

Tia turned to go, but a big dog bounded down the gangplank, its lead trailing behind it. It ran up to Tia and Norman, and bounced around them wagging its tail.

Norman wagged his tail too.

A girl ran up behind the dog and grabbed its lead.

"I'm so sorry," said the girl. "I couldn't hold him and he ran off. He likes to say hello to other dogs."

Tia smiled. "Norman likes to say hello to other dogs too."

"My dog's name is Guzzler," said the girl. "It's because he eats EVERYTHING!"

The girl looked about the same age as Tia. She wore a white T-shirt, denim shorts and bright yellow Crocs. “We saw dolphins on the way over, and seals,” she said with a big smile. “It’s amazing here. I love animals.”





“I love animals too,” said Tia. “I’m Tia, by the way.”

“I’m Nat,” said the girl. “We’re camping here for two whole weeks. It’s a holiday for Mum and me, but Dad is working. He’s a marine scientist and he’s helping to protect seagrass meadows.”

“That’s cool,” said Tia.

“How long are you staying?” asked Nat.

“I live here,” said Tia.

The girl’s eyes opened wide. “You are the luckiest person in the world. I’d love to live here.”

“I could show you around,” said Tia shyly.

“Really?” said Nat.

Tia nodded and grinned. Nat loved animals too and Tia just knew they were going to be best friends.

It was going to be the best summer ever.