

Chapter 1

I felt afraid as soon as I saw that boat. There was something shifty and sinister about it. It wasn't just that it was painted black. I have seen black fishing boats before. But this one was too smart, too flashy, too clean.

Sometimes holiday makers sail in to the bay on Fleet. Some of them are very rich. They like to show off their boats. One owner invited us to look at his gold taps and velvet beds. He had a top cook to plan his meals, and a butler to organise his day. He was like a kid with the best present in town. Yes, I have seen show-off boats with their show-off owners before. But this boat was

different. This one seemed to sneak up on us. I could tell when it arrived, that the owner of the Black Eagle was up to no good.

We were painting the lighthouse when the Black Eagle slipped into the bay. Painting the lighthouse is a big job. We have to do it every five years to keep it dazzling white. It is easier for the ships to see that way. Dad was on a platform hanging from ropes near the top. My twin Callum and I were on ladders at the bottom.

The Black Eagle sat out there in the water all day. Nobody came ashore. All day we could see the glint of a telescope, studying us. We waved, but nobody waved back.