

## The Island

The island had always been off-limits. Doran had learned from an early age that the edge of the sandbar was as far as she was allowed to go. Nobody could ever tell her why this was the case, but the adults of the tribe made it clear that the consequences would be dire.

Lately, the fish in the ocean had disappeared and Doran had been hunting them further and further afield. Her small steamer coped well with the smaller waves near to the inlet, but the choppy, foamy sea further out made her feel sick. Today, there was a storm brewing, and Doran knew she would have to turn back soon. Empty nets hung forlornly from the back of the boat. She knew the elders would be unhappy with her, but there was nothing else she could do.

Thunderous clouds rolled in from the east and darkened the mid-afternoon sky. Doran glanced over the edge of the boat, looking desperately for any flicker of life under the surface. As she pulled back, she noticed the boat had drifted in the current. The towering mass of the island loomed over her, its rocky crags and black stone mimicking the angry sky. She'd never seen this side of the island before. As far as she was aware, nobody had. She gulped. Her hand reached for the tender box. Without looking, she opened it and threw another bucket of coal onto the fire. The steam engine chuffed into life. Slowly, the boat started to move away from the desolate coastline.

Out of the corner of her eye, Doran saw something moving rapidly along the shore. It was something alive, but unlike any animal she had ever seen before. She slowed the boat down and turned to get a better look. A prickling sensation ran down her spine, the hairs on her arms stood on end. Something seemed odd about the creature. It was too far away to see any details, but it looked like a tall, slender girl. It appeared to have stopped running now and was staring out towards Doran. She could feel the intensity of its gaze bearing into her.

As she watched, the creature raised an arm and a small ball of light slowly moved out over the waves towards her. Before she could react, it had engulfed her body. She closed her eyes against the blinding brightness. When she opened them again, she was stood on the beach facing the strange being. She felt the wet sand between her toes - it was grittier than usual.



Now that she could see it up close, Doran knew that the being was something completely new. It had oval, silver eyes and its whole body was thin and stretched. Its ribs showed beneath pale blue skin.

“Who are you?” she asked.

When the creature spoke, it was in a language she didn’t understand. Nevertheless, the words formed perfectly in her mind. “I am Glick, and I am from another world. You have invaded our home. Why?”

“I didn’t know that this island was your home,” Doran said. She could feel herself panicking.

“We have hidden on this island since we arrived on your planet a hundred years ago. We have lived in peace until now. People will come with weapons and we will be forced to fight.”

“I promise I won’t tell anybody,” Doran said quickly. Had the elders known about these aliens? Is that why they told children to stay away from the island?

“Of course you won’t,” Glick said, “and that is because you will never leave.”

## VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. Which word tells you that the consequences of visiting the island would be bad?
2. Find and copy a phrase that means Doran was having to travel more.
3. Find a word that tells you something looked sad and alone.
4. What does the word “desolate” tell you about the island?
5. Find a synonym for “stare” in the text.

## VIPERS QUESTIONS

**S**

Why was Doran so far around the island?

**R**

Who was Doran worried about being in trouble with?

**R**

What was Doran hunting?

**I**

How did Doran feel when she started to speak to the alien?

**E**

The cause of Doran’s worry changes through the text. How does it change?