



Rumblestar: Chapter 13



Activity 1: Look at this description of the Drizzle Hags' home. They make rain. Now rewrite the paragraph describing the home of someone who might make sunshine.

times it was like listening to a bunch of twigs snapping, and led the way into the Damp Squib over a doormat which bore the words HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS, except the words HEART IS had been painted over so that really the mat said HOME IS WHERE THE ARGUMENTS HAPPEN instead. They entered a gloomy sitting room in which sat two damp sofas that were stained with mud and scattered with cushions embroidered with decidedly glum messages like HOME MISERABLE HOME. And at the far end of the room, rather than a fire crackling in the hearth, there was a cauldron filled with bubbling blue liquid which rose up the chimney as tiny blue droplets and looked exactly like a stream of marbles.



Activity 2: Draw the Drizzle Hags based on these descriptions.

Casper held his breath as the canoe drifted towards the Damp Squib because on the porch jutting out from the house there were three old ladies sitting in rocking chairs – and all around them the air misted with drizzle. The women wore rags over their hunched frames, their hair was strewn with mud and their feet were webbed. Back and forth the rocking chairs creaked and the drizzle hags stared ahead with empty eyes.

as one by one the hags blinked and three sets of grey eyes fixed on the canoe.

‘Well, well, well,’ crooned the hag in the middle. She was the tallest of the three and her chin was so pointed you could have cut a piece of toast with it. She cricked her neck and Casper shuddered as the bones inside it clicked, but then something far more disturbing happened. The woman’s neck craned out from her shoulders and grew longer and longer, and though the drizzle hag remained slumped in her chair, her neck slid down the ladder like an old snake until her head was hovering before them.

‘So,’ she said, her neck curling around the children as she spoke, ‘you passed through the Silver Tears *and* all the mudgrapple?’ She smiled, revealing toothless gums, then glanced up at the porch. ‘Come on down, ladies. We have company. It is time to make our guests feel as *unwelcome* as possible.’

There were several more cricks as the bones inside the necks of the other two hags loosened and then, moments later, their weathered faces coiled around the canoe. Casper tried not to gag at the smell of their breath, a revolting mix of rotten eggs and mould.

‘Allow us to introduce ourselves,’ the tallest of the hags smirked. ‘I am Hortensia Quibble and these are my dear friends, Sylvara Buckweed and Gertie Swamp. It is our displeasure to greet you on this beautifully drizzly afternoon.’

Sylvara and Gertie gave a wheezy snigger.

‘So, how long have you two burplings been friends?’ Gertie asked.