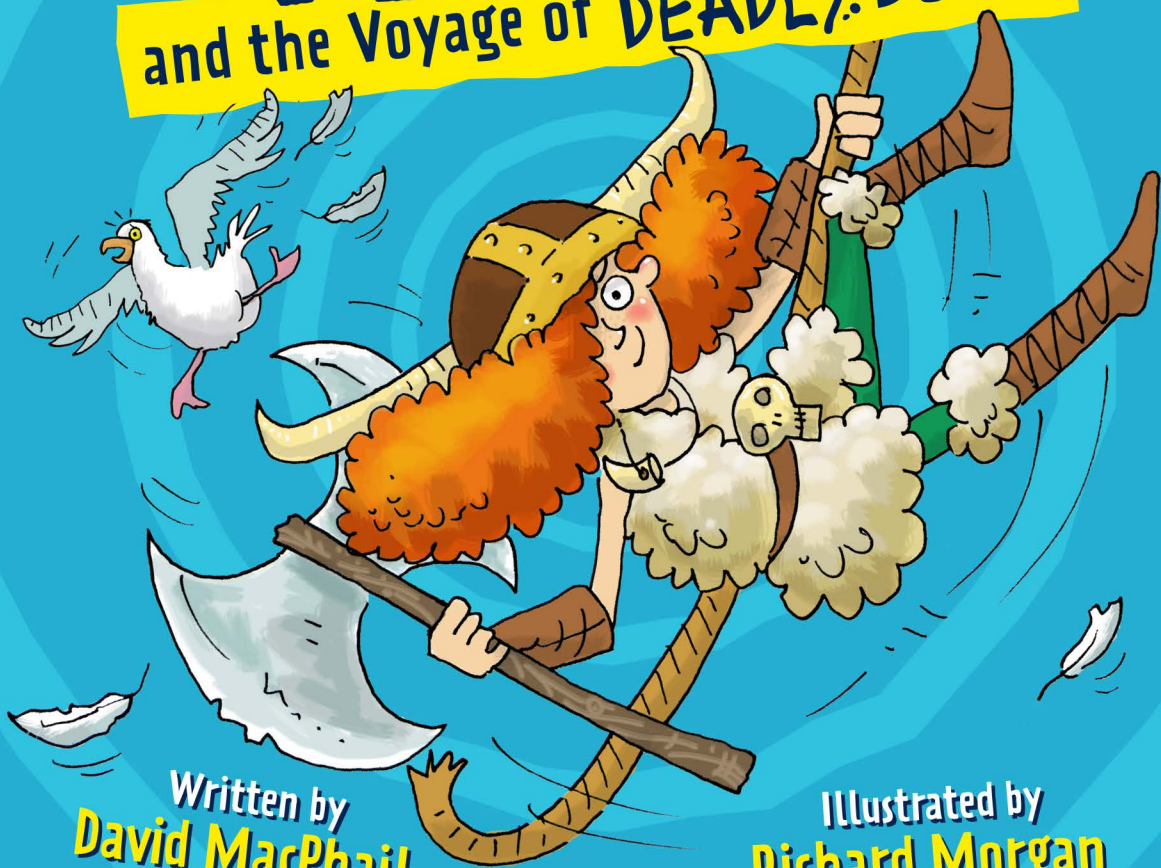


VELDA THE AWESOMEST VIKING

and the Voyage of DEADLY DOOM



Written by
David MacPhail

Illustrated by
Richard Morgan

To my Viking pals in P4 at Raploch Primary,
Stirling, and Mrs Hann – D.M.

For Harriet and all the Little Vikings
in Viking House! – R.M.

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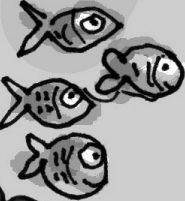
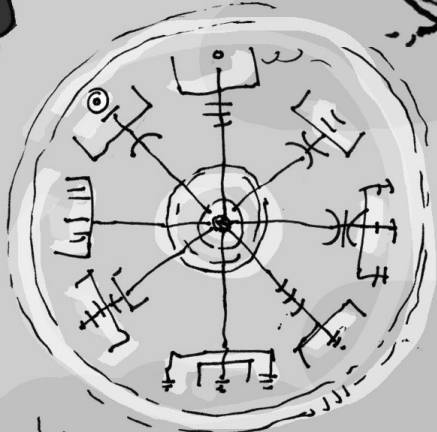
**VELDA THE
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Written by **David MacPhail**

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ICELAND

Islands of
Deadly Doom





Straits of Incredible DANGER

NORWAY

Island of Certain Death

Port Hengist

BRITAIN

GAUL

Chapter 1

It was the Dark Ages, when kings and queens went stumbling around their pitch-black castles shouting, “Help! Where am I? Who turned out the lights?”

The Vikings spread terror across the seas thanks to their fearsome dragonships and their even more fearsome **BELCHING**.

The most feared of all the Viking dragonships was the *Valkyrie* – a sleek, sturdy vessel with a sail of red-and-white stripes. The *Valkyrie* was crewed only by women, whose belching was so terrifying it could frighten mermen half to death.

The captain was a tall, blonde-haired woman called Freya. She was the noisiest and stinkiest belcher of all. Like most captains, she liked to gaze out to sea a lot with her hands on her hips, giving loud, hearty laughs, as you would if you were living a life of adventure and scaring people silly.

One day, as the *Valkyrie* was sailing the great Northern Sea, Freya turned to her helmswoman, Brunhilda of Barfhelm, and said, "Set sail for the Island of Certain Death!"

"OORAH!" cried her crew.

"OORAH!" echoed the youngest and newest crew member, Velda of Indgar. The tiny girl with thick red hair poking out from under a too-big helmet pumped her fist with glee. "YES! Certain death, *finally!*"

Velda rummaged around in her pack before festooning herself with leafy camouflage (for

sneaking purposes), coils of rope and a grappling hook (for climbing-somewhere-you-probably-weren't-meant-to-be purposes), and last but most definitely not least, weapons (for terrifying-people-until-they-cried purposes).

She leapt in front of Freya, whirling a gigantic axe around her head. "I am SOOOOOO ready for certain death, Boss!"



Freya gave another of her hearty laughs. “You don’t have to worry, Velda.”

Velda sliced the air with her axe. “Worry?! Are you kidding? This is exactly why I joined your crew. This is my chance to be a *real* Viking.”

“You *are* a real Viking,” said Freya. “That’s why I took you aboard.”

“Yeah, but girls were never allowed to do any of the fun Viking-y stuff back home in Indgar. It was always ‘Don’t yell so much, Velda!’, ‘Practise your weaving, Velda!’, ‘Stop trying to kill people you don’t like, Velda!’ Then they tried to confiscate my axe. That was the last straw.” And it really was, for Velda had chopped the wheel off the village hay wagon in a fit of anger, sending Indgar’s entire winter supply tumbling into the fjord. Velda didn’t run from *anyone*, but she’d just happened to decide

on a life at sea at the exact moment she'd been chased
by angry villagers with torches and pitchforks.



Freya sat Velda down on a bench, placing a hand on her shoulder. “You know, some things aren’t always what they seem.”

“What does that mean?”

“You’ll see,” smiled Freya. “We’re not your average Viking crew here on the *Valkyrie*.”

They really weren’t. Their legendary feats were spoken of far and wide: how they’d battled the Kraken of Corrievreckan, taken on the Terrible Trolls of Tromsø, and even stolen into the great hall of the Dwarf-Lords and nicked their famous golden underpants.

Velda reckoned the Island of Certain Death would be a picnic for this crew – and she was itching to prove she was Viking enough to be one of them.

Velda is a tiny warrior with a **BIG** axe
and an even **BIGGER** attitude.
Some people don't think girls can be proper
Vikings. *Velda doesn't agree!*



Velda must complete an epic quest to the
danger-filled Islands of Deadly Doom in
order to save the captured crew of legendary
longship the *Valkyrie*.

There's just one problem, well, more than one,
actually – she doesn't have a ship, a crew, or a clue
how to get there...

Join Velda as she makes some unlikely new friends
and takes on terrifying tasks, all while proving she's
the awesomest Viking around!



**Warning: contains terrible singing, an
acrobatic nun and very loud belching**

 **Young
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