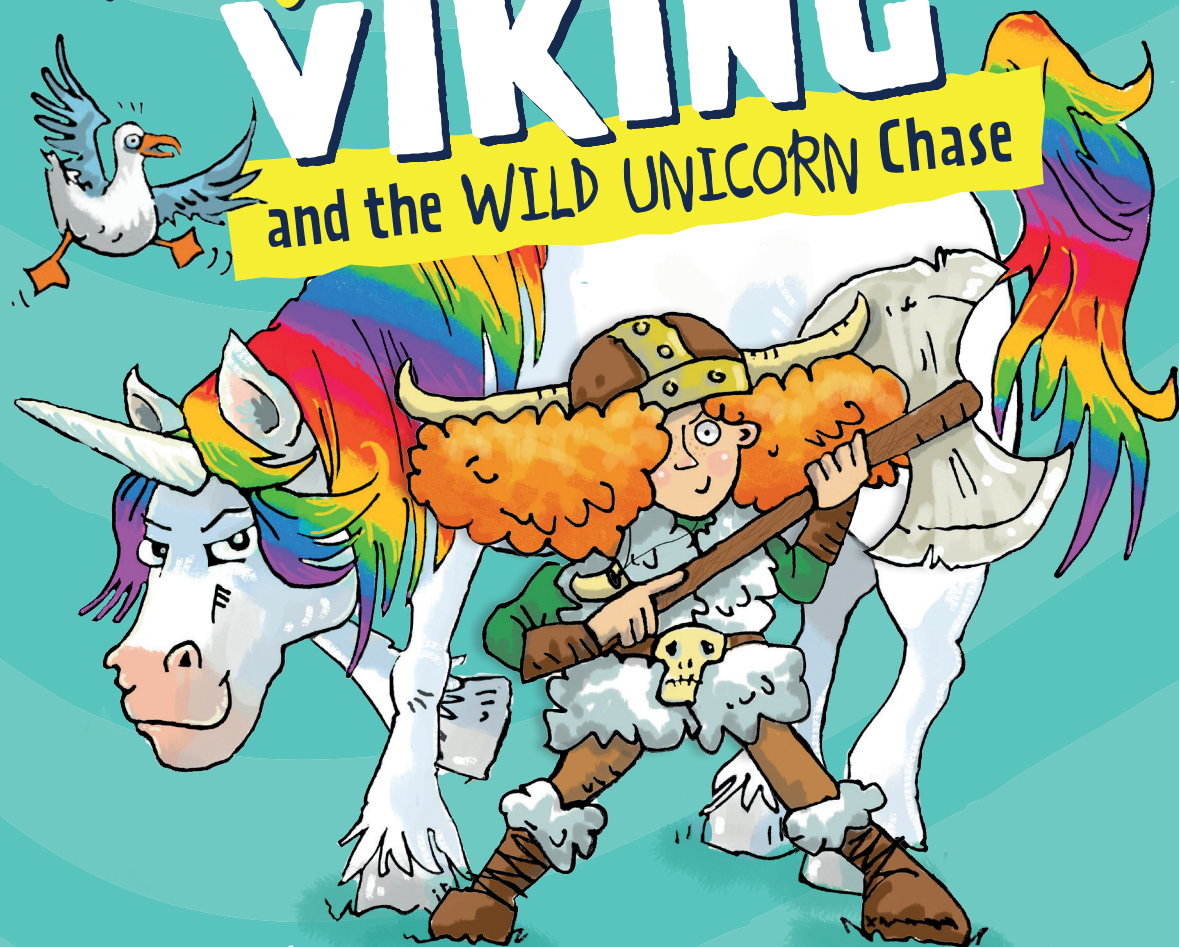


VELDA THE AWESOMEST VIKING

and the WILD UNICORN Chase



Written by
David MacPhail

Illustrated by
Richard Morgan



**VELDA THE
AWESOMEST
VIKING**

For my ultimate quest buddies,
Suzanne and Isla xx – D.M.

For Doug, who chases unicorns in his sleep – R.M.

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MEET THE CREW OF
THE MANGY MUTT



NISSA



**VELDA
THE
AWESOMEST
VIKING**



HENNA



MANDRAKE



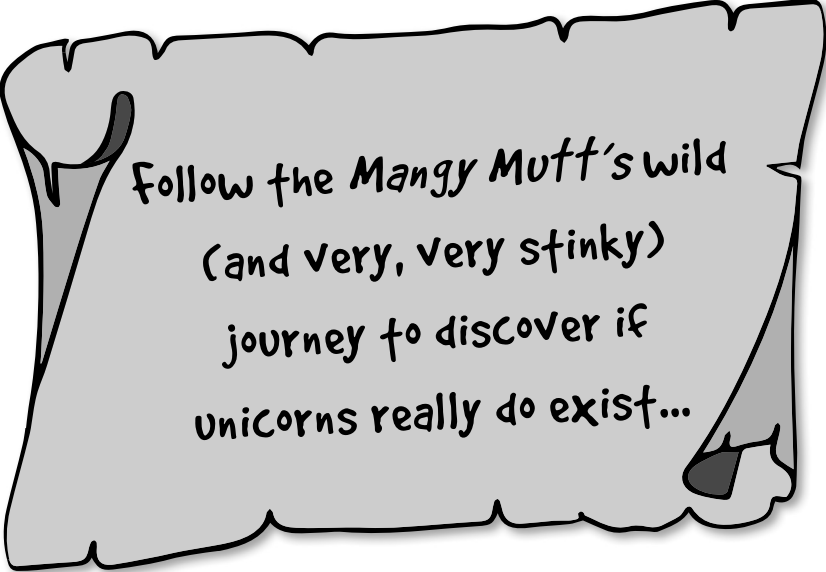
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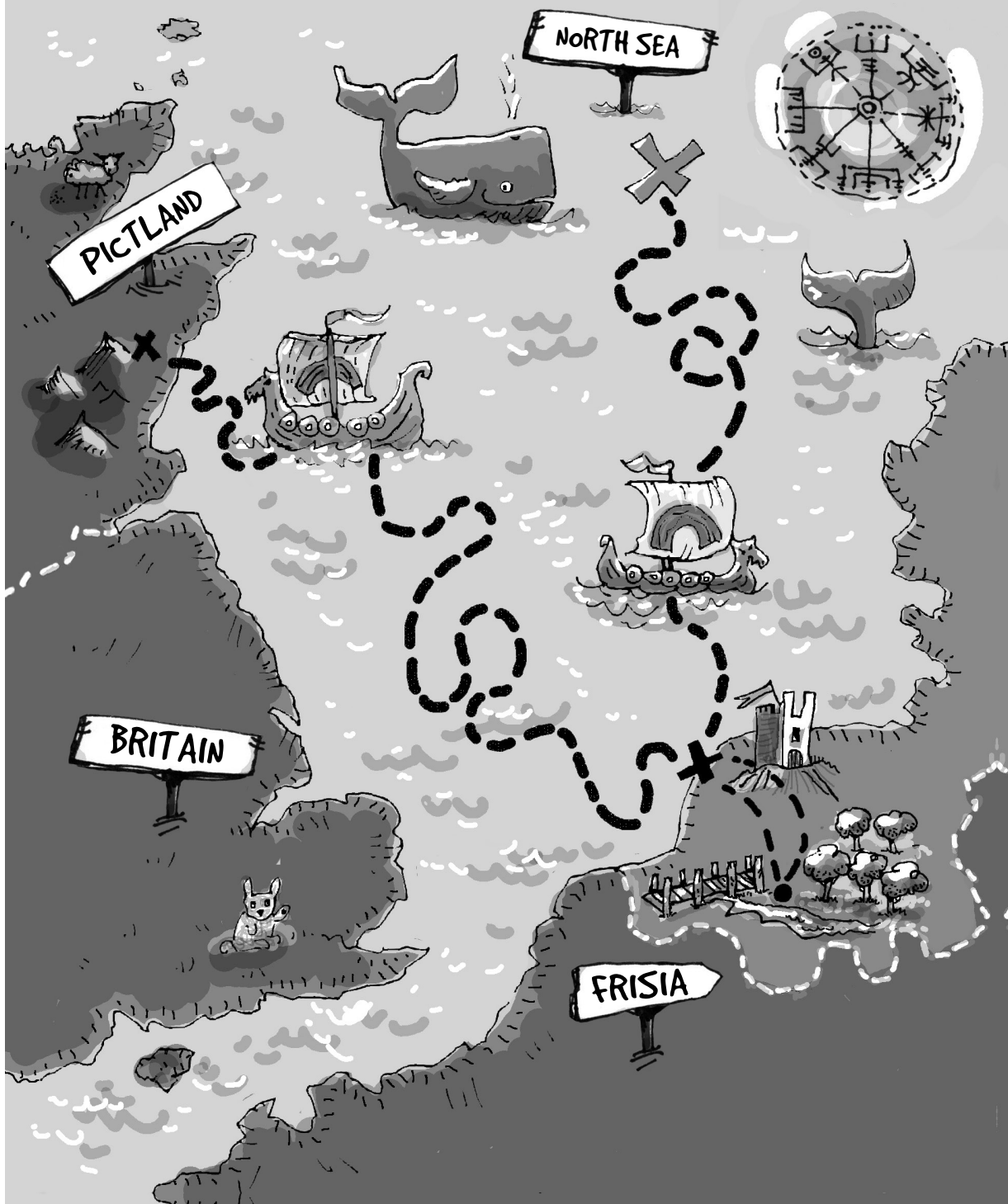
**LORD
EGBERT**



**SISTER
AKUBA**



Follow the *Mangy Mutt's* wild
(and very, very stinky)
journey to discover if
unicorns really do exist...



NORTH SEA

PICTLAND

BRITAIN

FRISIA

Chapter 1

The Vikings.

Big, hairy blokes who sailed around Europe, terrifying people with their giant beards and even gianter farts.

But they weren't all blokes. There was Velda. And she was a girl. A tiny one at that.

People thought small girls couldn't be Vikings, but they were wrong. Velda *was* a Viking, and a rather good one. Her favourite hobby was catapulting people who said she wasn't into the sea.

She'd even built her own collapsible catapult on her longship, the *Mangy Mutt*, and scratched along the side:

Compliments* of a small girl xxx

(*Vikings were famously bad at spelling.)

Her latest victim was Torsten the Terrible – a giant, red-bearded Viking with a fearsome reputation who had been whale hunting with his crew before Velda spotted them. She liked whales. They minded their own business. Unlike humans. But Torsten didn't look so fearsome now, trussed up on Velda's catapult. "P-please, don't fire me into the water," he whimpered. "I didn't mean to insult you!"

Velda glowered at him from under the thick red hair poking out of her helmet. "You patted me on the head and laughed."

"It was a friendly pat and a fatherly laugh."

"Then you said, and I'll quote you here: 'Everyone says small girls can't be Vikings.'"



“Ah, but you didn’t let me finish!” he croaked. “I was going to say, ‘I’m not everyone. I really REALLY think small girls can be Vikings.’”

Velda scowled. “I don’t believe you.”

“Please don’t fire me into the sea!” he pleaded. “My beard will get wet, and it takes me *ages* to get it fabulous again. Take all my silver instead!”

“I’m taking it anyway,” said Velda.

“Tell you what... I’ve a delicious sandwich here in my pouch,” he said desperately. “If you let me go, you can have it.”

Velda *was* hungry... “What’s in it?”

“Only the finest ingredients,” Torsten said. “A nice, fat slice of bacon...”

“I don’t like bacon.” Velda slouched against the mast, examining her nails.

“Mutton?” he offered.

“Nah. Too chewy.”

“Ox? Beef? Ham?”

She sighed. “You don’t have a sandwich, do you?”

He shook his head sadly. “No, but please don’t shoot me into the water!”

“Can’t hear you!” smirked Velda, reaching for the catapult trigger.

“PRETTY PLEASE! I’ll... I’ll tell you about a bounty I heard of.”

“Bounty?” Velda’s ears pricked up. A bounty was a reward offered by rich lords. Usually, it involved getting rid of some kind of nuisance for them.

Bandits, for example, rabid bears, other Vikings, or even those annoying living statues you sometimes got turning up in the marketplace.

“Yes, King Gerhart of Frisia’s kingdom is being terrorised by a terrible troll.”

Trolls, thought Velda, *now that would be interesting*. She'd dealt with Frost Giants before, and giant wolves, oh and not forgetting that oar salesman who wangled his way on board her ship and then wouldn't leave until she bought new oars. But never trolls. She'd only heard about these huge, brutish beasts in legends.

"Hmm... Thanks for the info," said Velda. "Well, I'm a woman of my word."

The trussed-up Viking smiled with relief. "Phew! I'm glad to hear it."

Velda's eyes gave a wicked sparkle as she twirled her giant axe in the air. It was far too big for her, but she didn't care. Her axe was her most favourite thing in the whole world, even more than her ship and her catapult combined. She loved the glint on its polished head, the zing as its blade cut through



the air, and the look of fear in her enemies' eyes when she swung it in their direction.

"Wait, what? B-but your word!"
Torsten stuttered.

"I never actually *gave* you my word, did I, you chump? See, not only am I a better Viking than you, but I'm smarter too. Byeee!"

Velda brought her axe crashing down, severing the catapult's rope. The bearded man shot off into the sky, far beyond the wreckage of his own longship.



"MYYY BEEEEAAAARRRD!"

In the distance, the ginormous flipper of a whale splashed out of the water. It caught the man and batted him towards another equally huge whale. They tossed him back and forth between themselves in a lively game of Viking volleyball.

Velda laughed and yelled: "Pick on someone your own size next time!"



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!



A troublesome troll is terrorising
the kingdom of Frisia, and he's stolen
Velda's beloved axe!



The only way to defeat him is with a special
potion made from unicorn horn. But wait!
Unicorns are extinct, aren't they?!

Join Velda on a voyage of daring, discovery
and er, unicorn doo-doo, all while proving
she's the awesomest Viking around.



More awesome adventures:



Warning: contains an extremely
stinky enemy and a LOT of belching!

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