



The
GREAT SEA
ADVENTURE



About the Author

Charlie Gannon

Charlie Gannon (aged 9) lives in Co. Galway, with his family. In 2024 Charlie submitted 'The Great Sea Adventure' in a story writing competition, which was held to celebrate the launch of Mairead's paintings. The stories were judged, and Charlie's submission was selected as the winner. We would like to thank all the participants who took part, including the runners up Sean Hoban and Cara O' Donnell.

About the Illustrator

Mairead Brennan

Artist & Illustrator During 2023/2024, creative Artist Mairead Brennan was commissioned to fill the aquarium with some fantastic new marine murals, while also updating some of the older pieces, which have lived in the aquarium since 1999.

After working with some high-profile companies and government bodies over the years, we were delighted to add the aquarium to the list of locations that display Mairead's work, including The Marine Institute, The Revenue Commissioners, Irish Life, Bórd Bia, Jacobs, Bewley's, and the Department of Health, to name but a few. She has also worked as a commissioned illustrator for Consumer Choice Magazine during her time in Dublin and for many years later.

We would like to thank Mairead for creating the Illustrations for Charlie's winning story. We hope you enjoy.

The Team at Galway Atlantaquaria.

The Great Sea Adventure



Once upon a time there lived a family of four. They lived in the city. The mom and dad were called Henrietta and David. Their two children were Henry and Ann, and a dog called Rex. One day Henry said "I'm tired of the city. You can't play sport. And you can't see the moon or the stars. I wish we lived by the seaside". Everyone agreed.

So a year later they lived in a cottage by the sea. One hot day Henrietta suggested that it would be fun to row to the little island they had not yet explored. "Just remember to bring Rex as well" said David. "Remember the last time we left Rex behind and he ate all the fruit" "Just remember to bring in the fruit bowl".

They set off starboard and when they reached the island they tied up the boat and explored. Henry saw that there was another boat as well as theirs. "Can we all go and see who it is?" he asked. Two people were getting out of the boat. One of them was thin with black hair and a grey beard. The other was bald and sour faced. None of the four liked the look of either of them. The one with the beard nodded to his companion. Then they pounced on Henry, Ann and Henrietta. David had seen a piece of paper slip out of the bald man's pocket. It looked like a map. Then the two men pounced on David and grabbed Rex. They brought them to a gorse bush and pushed them into a hole underneath. They landed in a room with clay walls. Days passed slowly. One day David said "I have an idea. If we pick up a stone we can hammer hand holds.





Then we can climb up and row to shore." After they had made handholds it was decided that David should go first. Underneath they all heard a scream then David fell back into the hole. "They ... h-have p-people g-guarding the hole" he panted. After that nobody had any idea of escaping until Ann had an idea.

"Why don't we write a note, tie it to Rex's collar then tell him to swim to the neighbours and give them the note. They will ask for help then come here to find us." said Ann.

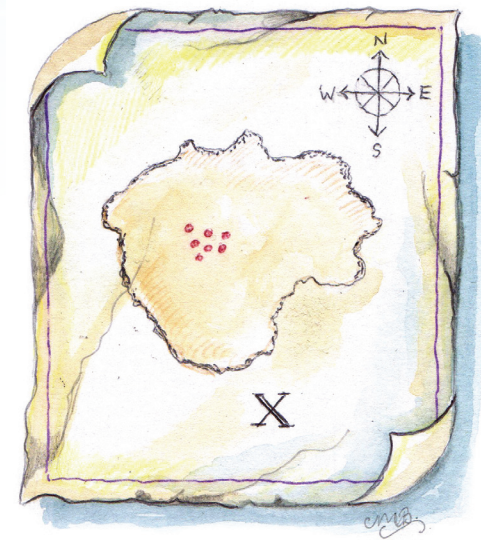
Twenty minutes later they heard an engine. "Quick, let's climb to the top so they can see us" said Henrietta. After a bit of a struggle they reached the boat. "We probably should tow their boat as well" said David.



Three days later as they walked across the beach Henry said "It's nice to be free but I wish we could find out what that map shows." "I think we should go back and look at the map" said Ann. "I have it in my pocket" said David. When they looked at the map Henry said "It looks like the little island. Why is there an X beside it?" "I think it's the place where stolen things are because pirates marked the spot with an X" answered Henrietta. "Let's go in the boat and try to find it" said David.

"I think we're there now" said Henrietta. Henrietta dived first. She came up panting. "I can't see anything" she said. "Let me try" said Henry. When Henry came up he said "I moved the seaweed and saw a sand coloured bag. I tried to lift it but it was too heavy."

David and Henrietta dived down together. After a lot tugging they managed to pull the bag up. "I bet these are the coins that were stolen from the bank last month. And now I come to think of it those two men did look just as people described the thieves."



Let's show them the bag and see if they give it away in their faces or their words. Then we will telephone the police" said David. When they were beside the island. David said "I can't see them. I wonder where they are. Henrietta and Henry go and find them. Me, Ann and Rex will wait in the boat because it might be a trap". After a long wait there was still no sign of Henry and Henrietta. "I think it was a trap. We should go back to shore and get help" said David.

With their neighbour Matt in the boat to help they rowed back to the island. David and Ann went ashore and looked in the hole under the gorse bush. "There's no one in here! I think we should look at the map" David said. When they had looked closely at the map, they noticed that there was seven red dots of ink. "That

might be more rooms like this room" said Ann. When they looked in one it was empty, the second was full of food, water and some rugs. The third had another bag, a bit like the one they had pulled up. The fourth was empty. In the fifth Henry and Henrietta were tied up.



After they had untied Henry and Henrietta they noticed the two men were coming toward them. "RUN" shouted Matt from the boat. They ran to the boat but rather than chase them the two men ran toward the room with the bag.

When they got to the boat they turned and saw the two men came out of the room with the second bag, grinning. A moment later their grinning turned to anger when they saw David on the boat, grinning, with the other bag raised in his hand.

David and Matt rowed the boat back to the mainland as quick as they could. After they had phoned the police and the thieves were arrested Henry said "I've learned something today. The sea is a lot more exciting than the city, nearly too exciting."

THE END

Galway Atlantaquaria®

Galway Atlantaquaria was opened in 1999. Home to over 70 species of marine and freshwater species, the aquarium prides itself on focusing on native Irish species, education and promoting ocean literacy. Its mission is to Engage, Educate and Inspire. For more information about the aquarium, the work it does and its staff see **nationalaquarium.ie**

