**Safia and the Captain**

Safia had been warned not to go out at night! Night was the time when the Captain skulked along the shoreline, searching. Now she was crouched in the darkness, staring across the wind-swept beach.

Rain lashed the jagged rocks, waves crashed upon the beach and the lighthouse beam flickered. Safia shivered, tucked the map into her leather bag and wondered where to shelter.

Out of the darkness, Safia had heard something moving by the harbour wall. Although she couldn't make out his features, couldn’t see through the rain and beneath the shadow of his hood, she felt sure that it was the Captain!

Without thinking, Safia dashed across the rain-swept beach and waited, stone-still, in the lee of a fishing boat. Silently, the shadow of a huge man paced the darkness, slinking along the rain washed shoreline.

Safia could hear heavy footsteps drawing closer, scrunching across the pebbles. Somethings on the man’s shoulder moved; a green, beady eye studied the darkness intently. In a heartbeat, she tasted regret. Had the Captain seen her?

At that moment, Safia could bear it no longer. Dashing across the beach, she vaulted the harbour wall and was alone at last. The Captain had not followed. Gripping the bag, she ran for Mrs Carswell’s but what she did not notice was the flutter of wings above.

1. What does a ‘wind-swept’ beach mean in the first paragraph? What do you imagine a wind-swept beach to look like?
2. Who do you think the Captain is?
3. What do you think the Captain might look like?
4. What does jagged mean?
5. Where do you think Safia got the map from?
6. How do you think Safia is feeling in the first paragraph?
7. What words in the text give us clues as to what the Captain might look like?
8. Why is ‘in a heartbeat’ a good way to describe time?
9. Why do you think the Captain did not follow Safia over the harbour wall?
10. Do you think the Captain still appears on warm, calm and peaceful nights? Why or Why not?