

Stanza 5

The persona finally questions who is responsible for killing the forest. The culprit – “sulphur dioxide” – answers. Sulphur dioxide is a colourless toxic gas which has an unpleasant smell. It is used in different types of industrial processes, including bleaching and food preservation. The toxicity of the gas causes it to completely kill the “forest” and every living thing in it, when the persona says from “earthworm” (a small creature living in the soil) to “linnet” (a small creature in the air).

Themes

1. Death

The poem reminds us that life is fragile. As a result of man’s actions, many plants and animals, big and small, die. Man’s irresponsible actions either directly or indirectly leads to the degradation of the environment.

2. Greed

Man’s greed for money and success has far-reaching consequences. When man’s desire for materials possessions exceeds their conscience, nature pays the price. Land, air and water are polluted with toxic wastes, harmful gases, smog and pollutants. As a result, the environment and everything living in it suffers or dies.

3. Exposing the truth

The persona asks the questions in order to expose the truth – who killed the robin, the heron, the lake, the flowers and the forest. We learn the identities of the culprits as well as the reasons for their death.

4. Accountability

The poem stresses that we should be responsible for our actions. The “worm”, “fish” and “wind” accept responsibility for their part in killing the other animals. Even the main cause of the environment’s degradation – “Industry” and “sulphur dioxide” – admit that they are responsible, but in an unapologetic manner.

Moral Values

1. We should conserve and protect the environment and everything in it.
2. We should live life without causing harm to others.
3. We should develop the ability to show empathy and show compassion to help others.
4. We should be accountable/take responsibility for our actions so we can find solutions to our problems quicker.

Setting

1. Place

The poem is set at any lake and forested area/woods which are close to humans, towns or cities.

2. Time

The poem refers to present day.

Persona

The persona is curious and eager for the truth. He is concerned about what is happening in the environment and demands to know who is responsible for killing the animals and plants. The reader can feel like he/she is talking to the non-human characters as they answer the persona’s questions. The reader gets the first person point of view of the non-human characters and learns about their feelings of guilt and remorse.

Tone and Mood

The persona creates a serious mood through his stern questions at the beginning of each stanza. However, the tone of the replies from the non-human subjects as they answer the persona’s questions is upsetting as the reader learns the truth of the death of flora and fauna. This creates a sad and solemn mood.

Language and Style

The first two lines of the poem are similar to an old nursery rhyme called ‘Who Killed Cock Robin?’

Poisoned Talk	Who Killed Cock Robin
Who killed cock robin? <i>I, said the worm,</i>	Who killed Cock Robin <i>I, said the Sparrow</i>
Who killed the heron? <i>I, mouthed the fish,</i>	
Who killed the lake? <i>I, boasted Industry,</i>	
Who killed the flowers? <i>I, moaned the wind,</i>	
Who killed the forest? <i>I ensured that it died,</i>	

1. Personification

The persona gives a voice to those responsible for causing so much destruction and damage to nature.

2. Symbolism

Symbolism is the use of symbols to signify ideas and qualities by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal sense. The plants and animals mentioned in the poem are all victims of pollution. They symbolise the damage done to nature as a result of Man’s greed for money and success.

3. Imagery

- ‘withered tree’ – portrays a sick and dying tree
- ‘moaned’ – hints that the wind answers in a low voice as it is feeling guilty
- ‘prowled unconfined’ – indicates that the wind is free to move from place to place as if in search of a prey

NOVELS

Introduction

A novel is a story created for a purpose. It entertains the reader, makes the reader think about something or experience an emotion. It is usually a long story, usually a work of fiction. Hence, the characters and events in the story are not real. However, it could be an autobiography and tell the true life of the author or even semi-autobiographical – part real-life and part fiction.

Similar to a short story, a novel contains elements such as plot, setting, characterisation, themes, moral values and point of view.

Elements of a Novel

1. Plot

Plot refers to a series of linked events that make up the story. It shows how past and future events are related. It has a beginning, a middle and an ending. A plot unfolds the story through the following stages:

Exposition	It functions as the introduction of the novel. The main characters are presented to the readers against the setting of the story. The reader is also introduced to the situations the characters face.
Conflict	The conflict refers to the problems or challenges the characters face and how they react to them.
Climax	It is the most exciting part of the novel. Here the conflicts may take a twist and become more complicated.
Falling Action	The events arising from the climax are presented here. Solutions the characters face are made known here.
Resolution	Here is where the story concludes. The reader gets the answer to the conflict as the problem is resolved.

2. **Setting**

The setting of the story gives more information about the characters which the author may not reveal directly to the reader.

The setting can be real or imaginary locations of the events in the story. Basically there are three types of settings:

Time setting	It refers to the time or period the story is set in.
Social setting	It refers to the social class and background of the main characters in the novel.
Physical setting	It refers to the places or scenes in the story.

3. **Characters**

The characters in a novel are the people in the story. The story usually revolves around the main characters who can be the protagonists or antagonists. The protagonist is the character around which the story centres upon. The antagonist is the villain who creates the conflict in the story. The main characters are one or several characters who are seen as crucial to the plot. The minor characters are created to support the development of the main characters.

4. **Themes**

It is basically the answer to the question – what the story is about. The theme refers to the main idea the author wants to convey to the readers through the story. The theme enables the author to raise certain issues in the story and show how the characters are affected by these issues.

5. **Moral Values**

These are the values, lessons and behaviours that are accepted as good by society. They are specific lessons which we can learn from, such as it is wrong to steal, we should keep our promises, or we have to help others in times of need.

6. **Point of View**

This refers to the perspective from which the story is told. It is about how the author directs the reader to see the characters or events in the story. The point of view can be conveyed in the first person where words 'I' and 'We' are used. The reader sees the story through the eyes of the narrator. This enables the reader to know what the character is thinking but not the other characters.

The story can also be told in the third person where words 'He', 'She', 'It' or 'They' are used. If the narrator or someone is not part of the story, the point of view is an all-omniscient point of view. The omniscient narrator knows all the thoughts and behaviour of the characters.

7. **Tone and Mood**

It is the atmosphere or feeling that the author invokes throughout the story. It is the attitude of the author towards the material and/or readers. It can be playful, formal, intimate, angry, serious, ironic, outraged, baffled, tender, serene or depressed.

8. **Language and Style**

The language used by the author and the way he uses it will determine his style of writing. The choice of words used, imagery and other literary devices will make his writing different from other writers.

To make the story more interesting and exciting, the author may use similes, metaphors, imagery or personification to create certain effects in the story.

Personification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is the treatment of abstractions or inanimate objects as humans. It gives the inanimate human characteristics or qualities. <p>Examples: <i>The sun dances gaily in the sky; The long grass sways gently in the wind</i></p>
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Simile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a comparison of two things or ideas that uses words 'like' or 'as'. <p>Examples: <i>The water was as cold as ice; She was thin like a rake.</i></p>
Metaphor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a figurative comparison of two things or thoughts. It describes one thing as being another. <p>Examples: <i>He is such a tiger; The veils of the morning</i></p>

NOVEL 1: *The Elephant Man retold by Tim Vicary*

Synopsis

Dr Frederick Treves, a doctor working in a London Hospital, meets a creature in a shop one day in 1884. The creature is known as the Elephant Man due to his appearance. After the meeting, Dr Treves learns the man's name – Joseph Merrick. He also asks to examine Merrick more carefully at the hospital. He pays some money to the shopkeeper and made arrangements so he can take Merrick to the hospital.

The next day, Dr Treves arrives at the shop and takes Merrick to the hospital in a taxi. During the trip to the hospital, Dr Treves talks to Merrick and gives him a card with his name on it. Merrick keeps the card in the pocket of his trousers. In the hospital, Dr Treves examines Merrick and makes notes about his observations. Later that day, Dr Treves takes Merrick back to the shop.

The next time Dr Treves meets Merrick is two years later. Merrick is brought by the police to the London Hospital after they see Dr Treves' card with him. Dr Treves wants Merrick to stay in the hospital so he tells the Chairman of the Hospital about Merrick's story. The Chairman writes a letter to the Editor of *The Times* to seek donations. Many readers contribute their money and it is enough for Merrick to make a home for himself in the hospital.

Merrick spends his time reading and talking about books. Dr Treves visits him every day and talks to him. Dr Treves also wants Merrick to meet more people. Dr Treves' friend, a beautiful young woman, comes for a visit. After the first meeting, the young woman visits Merrick a few more times and once comes with a friend. Merrick begins to have friends. More people read about him so he receives many visitors including several important people. One day, Her Majesty Queen Alexandra, the Queen of England, visits Merrick. The Queen visits Merrick several more times and even sends him a Christmas card. Merrick, then, writes a letter – his first in his life – to the Queen.

With Dr Treves' help, Merrick goes to a theatre to watch a children's Christmas play and later, stays in a small house in the country. He spends six weeks in the country alone. He enjoys his time there thoroughly and writes to Dr Treves every week. Merrick returns to London when summer ends.

In April 1890 – six months after returning from the country – Merrick dies in his bed. The following day, the Chairman of the Hospital writes, once again, to the Editor of *The Times* about Merrick's passing.

Characters

Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main characters Minor characters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Frederick Treves, a doctor at London Hospital Joseph Merrick, a severely deformed man/the Elephant Man
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Simon Silcock, the shopkeeper Mr Carr Gomm, Chairman of the London Hospital Queen Alexandra, the Queen of England Mrs Kendal, lady at the theatre

Setting

1. **Time:** The story about the Elephant Man begins in April 1884 when Dr Treves first meets Merrick and ends with the later's death in April 1890.
2. **Social:** The period in English history at that time was the Victorian age. During Victorian times, society was divided into many layers – rich and poor, or upper, middle and lower classes.
3. **Place:**
 - (a) **London**
 - The shop – where Dr Treves first meets Merrick
 - London Hospital – Dr Treves' workplace. He examines Merrick and writes down his observations the day after their first meeting. Two rooms at the back of the hospital become Merrick's home for the last three and a half years of his life.
 - The theatre – where Merrick watches a children's Christmas play
 - (b) **The countryside** – Merrick spends six weeks in a small country house
 - (c) **Belgium** – The shopkeeper, Mr Silcock, takes Merrick to Belgium and, after a year, leaves him there.

Themes

1. **Power of kindness**

Members of the public who read about Merrick condition show sympathy and interest to help him have a home in the hospital. As a result of their overwhelming response, a lot of money is collected so Merrick can get a permanent home.
2. **An indomitable spirit**

Even though he is living in emotional and physical pain, Merrick shows strength, bravery and determination. He lives during a time when appearance and connections in society are very important. He struggles but does not give up on life.
3. **Social class and power**

Due to the various classes in the Victorian society, some have more power and authority, live in better conditions and have easier access to modern facilities than others. The story records the different treatment Merrick receives from people from different social classes in Victorian times.

Moral Values

1. We should not judge others based only on their appearance.
2. We should show compassion to the less fortunate as our small contribution can help make their lives more comfortable.
3. We should learn to put ourselves in other people's shoes so we do not criticise or belittle them.
4. We should be inspired by someone with an indomitable spirit, like Merrick.

Point of View

This story is based on the life of Joseph Carey Merrick who lived from 5 August 1862 to 11 April 1890. He is known as the Elephant Man due to his deformity. The story is written from a first-person point of view of Dr Frederick Treves. Dr Treves chronicles/records Merrick's story beginning with his first encounter with Merrick and continues when he meets Merrick again a couple of years later. During the three and a half years Merrick lives in the hospital, Dr Treves records the changes in Merrick's life and the new things he experiences.

Tone and Mood

The first-hand account from Dr Treves about the tragic life of Merrick is informal. It chronicles Merrick's life and experiences due to his deformity. The mood the true-life account creates is sympathy and sadness as we learn about Merrick's hard life but the mood changes to one of hope and excitement as Merrick thrives in his new home in the hospital. However, his sudden death, especially when he is just beginning to enjoy his life, is devastating.

Language and Style

The language used in the account of the later years of Merrick's life – a real person who had extreme facial and body deformity – is easy to understand. The writer, Dr Treves, states facts and presents his observation of Merrick when he first crosses paths with him. His description is straightforward and informative as he gives readers an idea of Merrick's appearance and tragic circumstances.

Dr Treves narrates the last three and a half years of Merrick's life using simple language. He includes letters written by the Chairman of the Hospital and by Merrick to the Queen and himself, as well as a Christmas card from the Queen to describe the changes in Merrick's life and how he is affected by these new and positive changes.

NOVEL 2: *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville

Synopsis

Ishmael, the narrator, goes to Nantucket to become a whaler. There he meets Queequeg and they become great friends. Ishmael signs up to work on the *Pequod* and the following day takes Queequeg to the *Pequod*.

The *Pequod* sails on Christmas morning. After three weeks, Captain Ahab appears on deck and tells the crew about Moby Dick. They learn about his obsession to kill the white whale. Starbuck tells Captain Ahab that his plan is crazy but the captain declares that the white whale is evil.

The crew of the *Pequod* go after their first whale. Ishmael sees Captain Ahab's men, including Fedallah, go after the whale. Due to heavy rain and strong winds, their first whaling encounter is unsuccessful.

After that, the crew of *Pequod* successfully hunt many whales. However, Captain Ahab isn't happy. He constantly thinks of Moby Dick. The *Pequod* meets other ships such as the *Albatross* and *Samuel Enderby*, but Captain Ahab is only interested in information about Moby Dick. Captain Ahab only talks to Fedallah. He looks at his maps while Fedallah watches for whales at night. One night, Fedallah spots Moby Dick. They follow Moby Dick but they lose it.

Many weeks after that, Pip, a young cook, goes on a whaling trip. However, he jumps out of the boat on the second and third trips. When he jumps out on the third trip, Stubb leaves him in the ocean and goes after the whale. Pip is in the ocean a long time. As a result, he becomes a little crazy. After he is rescued, he follows Captain Ahab everywhere and thinks Captain Ahab is God.

Later, Starbuck discovers that they are losing oil in the barrels. However, Captain Ahab is only focussed on Moby Dick and does not listen to Starbuck when he pleads for him to stop and fix the barrels. Later, Captain Ahab stops the ship and tells the men to fix the problem with the barrels. Queequeg is involved in this hard and heavy work and falls very ill. He thinks he is going to die so he asks for a coffin to be built. Ishmael and the others are sad. Then, one morning, Queequeg declares he has things to do first so he will die later. The coffin is stored with the barrels.

Captain Ahab tells Fedallah about his dream where he dies and sees his coffin. Fedallah informs the captain that he will be killed by a rope. Fedallah also tells Captain Ahab that he (Fedallah) will die first. The following day, some of the crew members see Captain Ahab angrily throwing away his maps. Starbuck and the men are afraid. Captain Ahab also threatens to kill any man who tries to turn the *Pequod* around. Later, Starbuck is in Captain Ahab's room and has an opportunity to kill him but cannot bring himself to do it.

The *Pequod* crosses paths with the *Rachel*. Captain Ahab wants to know about Moby Dick and learns that it is close by. However, Captain Ahab refuses to help the captain of the *Rachel*, who is looking for his 12-year-old son who is missing. Even though some of the whalers want to help the captain of the *Rachel*, they have no choice but to follow their captain who only wants to look for Moby Dick.

Moby Dick is sighted and Captain Ahab sends his men out. Captain Ahab and his men are in the first boat. There are many harpoons in Moby Dick's body. The battle with Moby

Dick goes on for three days. On the first day, Captain Ahab's boat is capsized. On the second day, it capsizes again. On this day, Captain Ahab also loses his whalebone leg and Fedallah is killed. On the third day – with only one whaling boat left – Ishmael follows Captain Ahab and some of the other whalers after Moby Dick. When Moby Dick emerges from the ocean, they see Fedallah's body. Captain Ahab throws a harpoon at Moby Dick. It hits their whaling boat and Ishmael falls out. The boat sails away fast, leaving Ishmael in the water. Moby Dick targets the *Pequod*. It hits the ship and it sinks. Captain Ahab throws another harpoon at Moby Dick. However, Captain Ahab gets tangled in the rope at the end of the harpoon and is pulled out of the boat. Ishmael watches the *Pequod* and his friend, Queequeg, go under the water. The whaling boat with Captain Ahab's men is also pulled under the water.

Then, Queequeg's coffin pops out of the water near Ishmael. He climbs onto it. Later, he is rescued by the *Rachel*, whose crew are still looking for their captain's missing son.

Setting

- Time:** The story is set in mid nineteenth-century America.
- Social:** During this period in American history, the country was experiencing industrialisation. Young Americans were exploring the west to seek new land and opportunities. At that time, people not only from Europe but also from Tahiti, Fiji and Indies travelled to America and worked in farms and factories. Many of the crew on the *Pequod* were from different parts of the world – showing how America was a melting pot of different cultures. During this period also the whaling industry was profitable. Ports such as Nantucket and New Bedford were rich and prosperous because their whaling ships sailed the oceans.
- Place:**
 - Nantucket** – The town where the first American whalers sailed, Ishmael goes there to be a whaler, Ishmael meets Queequeg here.
 - The *Pequod*** – The whaling ship, captained by Ahab, which ultimately sinks after Moby Dick hits it.
 - The open sea** – The Pacific Ocean where Captain Ahab takes the *Pequod* to whale and hunt Moby Dick.

Characters

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|------------|-----------------|---|
| Characters | Main characters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ishmael, the narrator of the story, a sailor, a junior crew member of <i>Pequod</i>, lone survivor of the <i>Pequod</i> Ahab, captain of the <i>Pequod</i> Moby Dick, the great white sperm whale Starbuck, the first mate of the <i>Pequod</i>, who thinks that Captain Ahab's obsession with Moby Dick is crazy. Queequeg, Ishmael's good friend. He is a skilled harpooner and the finest whaler on the ocean. |
| | | Minor characters |

Themes

- Revenge**
Captain Ahab is obsessed with killing Moby Dick, the white whale. He has lost his leg because of Moby Dick and this makes him feel half a man. He is convinced that Moby Dick is evil. He believes he will have peace only when Moby Dick is killed. Captain Ahab's desire for revenge is all he can think about. He abandons good values such as compassion and does not help Captain Gardiner look for his missing son or think of the lives of his crew and their families when he chooses to pursue Moby Dick.
- Friendship**
Ishmael, the narrator, and Queequeg, share a great friendship. From their first meeting, they form a bond – spending the night sharing their life stories and becoming great friends by the next morning. Queequeg predicts that Ishmael will find a whaling ship that they will both travel on. Queequeg, indirectly, saves Ishmael's life at the end of the story. The coffin, which Queequeg had built for himself earlier when he was sick and thought he was going to die, saves his best friend's life. Ishmael uses it as a life buoy until he is rescued by the *Rachel* – making him the only survivor of the fight with Moby Dick.
- Death**
The theme of death is obvious throughout the story. The *Pequod* is a symbol of death as it is taking its crew of a journey which will only end in disaster. The coffin indicates death when it is built for Queequeg who thinks he is going to die. Whaling is also a dangerous occupation and death can come at any time to whalers when they go out on their small boats to kill large whales. Fedallah also predicts his and Captain Ahab's deaths. Fedallah says that he will die first and then, Captain Ahab will die caused by a rope.
- Man vs Nature**
The story shows that humans are just a small entity in the vast natural world. When we don't respect nature, we are disturbing the natural balance in the environment. We cannot co-exist peacefully when we choose to intrude into the natural habitat of the world's magnificent animals.

Moral Values

- We should not allow one goal to take control of our life until we forget all the other important things.
- We should think for ourselves and not follow someone blindly as they can lead us down a dangerous path.
- We should not hold on to our anger at someone or something or desire to get even. We will lose our peace of mind if we let anger take over our life.

Point of View

The narrator of the story is Ishmael, who gives a first person point of view. He is also the lone survivor of the *Pequod*, therefore allowing the story to be told.

Tone and Mood

The tone at the beginning of the story is light as Ishmael, the narrator, gives background information about himself and of his meeting with his future good friend, Queequeg. His tone is thoughtful throughout the story as he writes with attention to the feelings and experiences of the other characters. The tone turns tragic as he describes Captain Ahab's obsession with Moby Dick, the captain's crazy plan to go after Moby Dick without a thought of his crew's safety and finally, the crew's fight with the white whale which ultimately causes everyone, except the narrator, to perish. Even the *Pequod* is hit by Moby Dick and sinks – signifying the total destruction of Captain Ahab by the white whale.

The mood of doom approaching is felt early in the story when an old man named Elijah describes Captain Ahab – the captain of the *Pequod*, the ship Ishmael and Queequeg have signed up to go whaling – as 'a sick man' and 'the devil'. Captain Ahab also discloses his crazy plan to go after the 'evil' white whale, Moby Dick, three weeks after setting sail. The mood that tragedy is looming and that the *Pequod* journey is only leading towards disaster comes across clearly.

Language and Style

The language used in the story is simple and easy to understand. The style the narrator uses is narrative. He is observant and describes the events and what is happening with the characters. He also describes the changes he sees in the characters' behaviour and the emotions they show throughout the journey of the *Pequod*.

Literary Devices

1. Symbolism is the use of symbols by giving them a different meaning which is deeper. Symbols are ideas, sounds, images or words which represent something else and help readers understand a thing or an idea. Symbols appear a few times in this story.
 - **Moby Dick** or the white whale means different things to different people in the story. To Captain Ahab, Moby Dick symbolises evil and he makes it his goal to destroy this evil.
 - **The *Pequod*** is a symbol of doom and indicator of death. It takes its crew on a journey destined for disaster. In the end, all those on board the ship are killed after it is struck by Moby Dick. The sinking *Pequod* pulls the whaling boat and all the men in it under water.
 - **Queequeg's coffin** symbolises life and death. The coffin is built when Queequeg is very sick and he thinks he is going to die. After he recovers, the coffin is put away. Later, when *Pequod* sinks, the coffin becomes Ishmael's 'life boat'. It emerges to the surface and Ishmael climbs on it. He stays on it for two days and two nights until he is rescued by the crew of the *Rachel*.
2. Motifs are ideas, sounds, images or words which help to explain the main idea or theme of the story. Motifs can be seen throughout the story.
 - Moby Dick highlights the motif of the colour white. The colour white is usually associated with purity but for Captain Ahab it means all things bad – 'white is the colour of dead men', 'white is evil'. The colour white helps explain Captain Ahab's obsessive desire for revenge. He equates anything white with evil that must be destroyed – 'white is the ice and ice takes strong ships down under the water' and 'white is evil and this (white) whale is evil'.

NOVEL 3: *We Didn't Mean To Go To Sea* by Arthur Ransome

Synopsis

John Walker, his mother and siblings – Susan, Roger, Titty and Bridget are new in Pin Mill. John, Susan, Roger and Titty spend the day after they arrive there watching boats on the river. They get into an old rowing boat and John rows close to a black buoy which has the name of a boat – the *Goblin* – on it. They see a boat coming towards them and help the owner of the boat fix the rope to the black buoy. The boat is the *Goblin* and her captain is Jim Brading.

Jim invites the children on the *Goblin*. After introductions, they help Jim with some work on the boat. Then, their mother and Bridget come looking for them. Jim is invited to supper. During supper, Jim invites them to spend the night on his boat. The children's mother finally allows them to go after she finds out more about Jim the following day. She gets information about their travel route and gets Jim's assurance that they will not go out of the harbour. Her children also promise that they will be back in Pin Mill in time to welcome their father.

The crew of the *Goblin* bid their mother and sister goodbye and sail away. Jim allows John to steer the *Goblin*. Susan also gets a chance to steer. They go ashore at Shotley Pier to have supper. Then, Jim and the children return to the *Goblin* and sleep.

The next morning, the crew of the *Goblin* set sail. However, the tide begins to carry the *Goblin* towards the Beach End buoy and the open sea, so Jim starts the engine. However, it stops. Jim decides to row ashore to get petrol. While Jim is away, John is left in charge. Two hours later, it begins to get foggy even in

the harbour. The four Walker children hear the foghorn sound from the sea. Hours go by and the fog is still thick.

After many hours later, the *Goblin* begins to move even though it is anchored. John loses the boat's anchor and chain. John and Susan let the second anchor into the water but the *Goblin* begins to move again. Soon, they see a buoy with the words 'Beach End' and the *Goblin* is out at sea.

John keeps thinking what Jim will do had he been on the boat. He decides to sail into the fog but Susan is unhappy. Then, he decides to go out to the open sea to stay clear of the shoals around the lightship. The *Goblin* sails through the fog, passes the Cork lightship and towards the next lightship and is safe outside all the shoals. Soon the fog disappears and it begins to rain. When it finally stops raining, it is dark. John reluctantly agrees to turn back but there are strong winds and the *Goblin* is tossed about. John turns the *Goblin* away from the wind and is back on her old route.

Then, the Walker children see a big ferry from Holland to Harwich coming their way. The *Goblin* has no lights so Roger sounds the foghorn. The ferry avoids running into the *Goblin*.

Later, John lets Susan steer so he can sleep. When he gets up, it is nearly daylight. John decides to sail straight on to land. After the sun rises, they spot a little cat in a box floating in the water. The children save the cat and name it Sinbad.

After that, John spots fishing boats with unfamiliar sails. They see a pilot ship and the pilot guides the *Goblin* through the mouth of the harbour. They see a Dutch ferry and see their father on it. Once the *Goblin* is in the harbour, the pilot asks again for the captain of the *Goblin*. He is shocked when he discovers that there are only children aboard the *Goblin*. The children's father joins them. Later, the *Goblin* and their crew – the children and their father – sail back across the North Sea towards England.

Meanwhile, Jim Brading wakes up in a hospital. He remembers that he left the four Walker children by themselves on the *Goblin*. He rushes out of the hospital and takes a bus to the harbour. He, then, remembers that he was hit by a bus. He desperately looks for the *Goblin* around the harbour. After that, someone tells Jim that *Goblin* is approaching, so Jim rows to meet her.

The crew of the *Goblin* approach the harbour and the children are reunited with Jim. Jim tells them that he was in the hospital. Later, the Walker children meet their mother and Bridget. She learns that Jim had an accident and realises it wasn't completely her children's fault that they had broken all their promises. Slowly, she finds out what really happened and that her children didn't mean to go to sea.

Characters

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|------------|-----------------|--|
| Characters | Main characters | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• John, Susan, Roger and Titty, the Walker children• Jim Brading, captain of the <i>Goblin</i>• Mary Walker, the children's mother• Commander Ted Walker, the children's father• Bridget Walker, the youngest Walker child |
| | | Minor characters |

Setting

1. **Time:** The story is set in August 1931.
2. **Place:** The places mentioned in the story – Harwich Harbour, Shotley, Pin Mill, Flushing (in Holland), and the rivers – River Orwell and River Stour, actually exist.
 - (a) **An old rowing boat** – the Walker children are in this boat on the river when they see the *Goblin* and meet Jim
 - (b) **Harwich harbour** – the Walker children and Jim are supposed to spend the night in the *Goblin* while they sail in this harbour without leaving it; the children (with their father on board) are reunited with Jim after he leaves the hospital
 - (c) **The *Goblin*** – Jim Brading’s boat; the Walker children sail alone on this boat from Harwich harbour across the North Sea to Flushing, Holland and then, back again to Harwich harbour with their father on board
 - (d) **Off Shotley Pier** – the children and Jim stop here (on their first night in the *Goblin*) in Harwich harbour to have supper and for the children to call their mother
 - (e) **Pin Mill** – the Walker children, mother and little sister live in Alma Cottage; the children, their father and Jim meet Mrs Walker and Bridget here after their adventure out in sea
 - (f) **Flushing, Holland** – the Walker children dock the *Goblin* here; meet their father here; go ashore to send a telegram to their mother and have some food before sailing back to Harwich harbour

Themes

1. **Love for sailing**

The Walker children love sailing and being at sea. They are interested in boats and sailing. They are eager to know more about Jim’s voyage from Dover. The children’s dangerous sea voyage is a result of their love for sailing. They are invited by Jim to spend the night on his boat and later it slowly drifts away from the harbour.
2. **Self-reliance**

John and his siblings have their own abilities and strengths. They use their knowledge, skills and experience about sailing on small boats to survive the dangerous voyage across the open sea to Flushing, Holland. They also rely on their abilities and resourcefulness to rescue a little cat in the middle of the sea.
3. **Courage**

John shows courage when he makes difficult decisions in order to keep his siblings and the *Goblin* safe. Even when Susan is unhappy and wants him to go back, he stands by his decision. It takes courage to do something new and scary because the outcome is unknown.
4. **Being responsible**

John is left in charge of the *Goblin* when Jim has to go ashore to buy petrol for the boat. He feels bad when he is not vigilant and he loses the boat’s anchor and chain. He also feels responsible for his siblings and does all he can to keep them safe. He also remembers what Jim had told him earlier about keeping the boat safe so he goes out to the open sea.

Moral Values

1. We should stay calm during tense and dangerous situations so we do not make them worse.
2. We should always act responsibly and carry out our duties to the best of our abilities.
3. When someone trusts us to do a job or take care of their things, we should do it well.
4. We should look out for others – siblings, cousins, relatives or friends – especially people who look to us for guidance and support.
5. We should try new things or be up for an adventure. When we push ourselves to try new things, we learn more about ourselves and discover what we are capable of doing.

Point of View

The story is written in the third person point of view. The pronouns such as ‘she’, ‘he’, ‘it’ or ‘they’ or a name are used.

Tone and Mood

The tone at the beginning of the story is light-hearted. It changes to serious as the children have a danger-filled voyage across the North Sea. The tone shifts once again to optimism as the children reach land safely and their ordeal – sailing alone in open sea – comes to an end.

The mood the story creates among readers at the beginning is happy as the children are excited about staying on a boat. However, as they sail through the storm and go further away into the open sea, the mood turns fearful and anxious. The mood returns to calm, relief and joy as the children reach Flushing, meet their father and return to Harwich harbour with him.

Language and Style

The language used by the writer is simple and easy to understand. The writer narrates the sequence of events of the Walker children’s dangerous adventure at sea. The story includes many words related to sailors and navigation. The style of the story is narrative – where the writer gives an account of the children’s frightening experience when the *Goblin* is adrift across the North Sea during a stormy night.

Literary Devices

1. **Personification** refers to giving human qualities to non-human objects in order to bring them to life.
 - “The night was so calm ...
 - “The *Goblin* was a happier ship now...”
 - “...rain, beating down into the sea”
2. **Imagery** refers to the use of words to create visual representation of ideas or mental pictures. Objects, ideas or actions are represented in such a way that they appeal to our physical senses.
 - “...the grey curtain of fog” (visual image)
 - “...a white wall of rain...” (visual image)
 - “...sail was making a noise like thunder...” (sense of hearing)
 - “Shut up! shouted John angrily.” (sense of hearing)
 - “...cold, wet body of the little cat...” (sense of touch)