

**KEREEN GETTEN** grew up in Jamaica, where she would climb fruit trees in the family garden and eat as much mango, guinep and pear as she could without being caught. She now lives in Birmingham with her family and writes stories about her childhood experiences. Her work has been shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize, the Spark Award, Warwickshire Junior Book Award and the Jhalak Children's & YA Prize. The first book in the Di Island Crew Investigates series, *The Case of the Lighthouse Intruder*, was a Waterstones Book of the Month. *When Life Gives You Mangoes* and *If You Read This* are also available from Pushkin Children's.



Di ISLAND CREW INVESTIGATES

*The*  
**CASE**  
*of the*  
**ABANDONED**  
**BOAT**

**Kereen Getten**

Illustrated by Leah Jacobs-Gordon

Pushkin Children's

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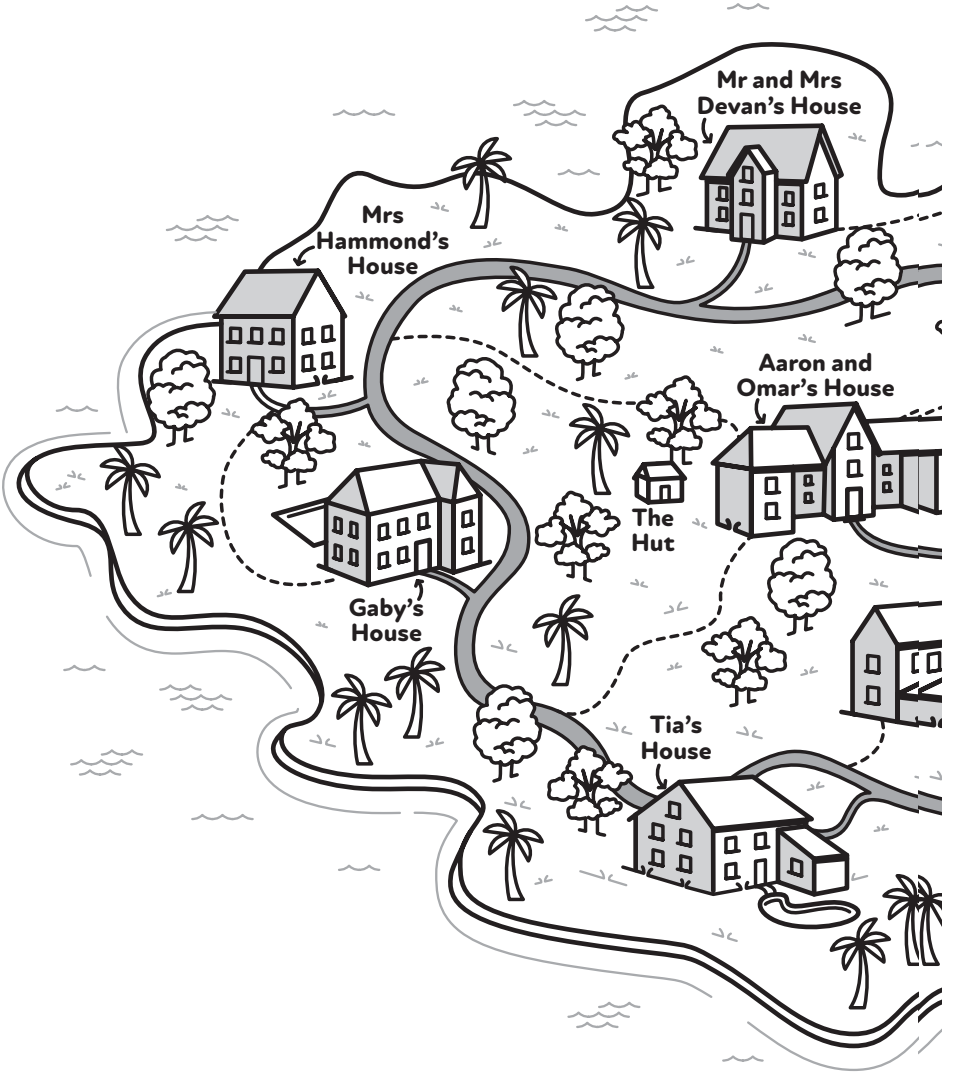
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*The*  
**CASE**  
*of the*  
**ABANDONED**  
**BOAT**



Mr and Mrs  
Devan's House

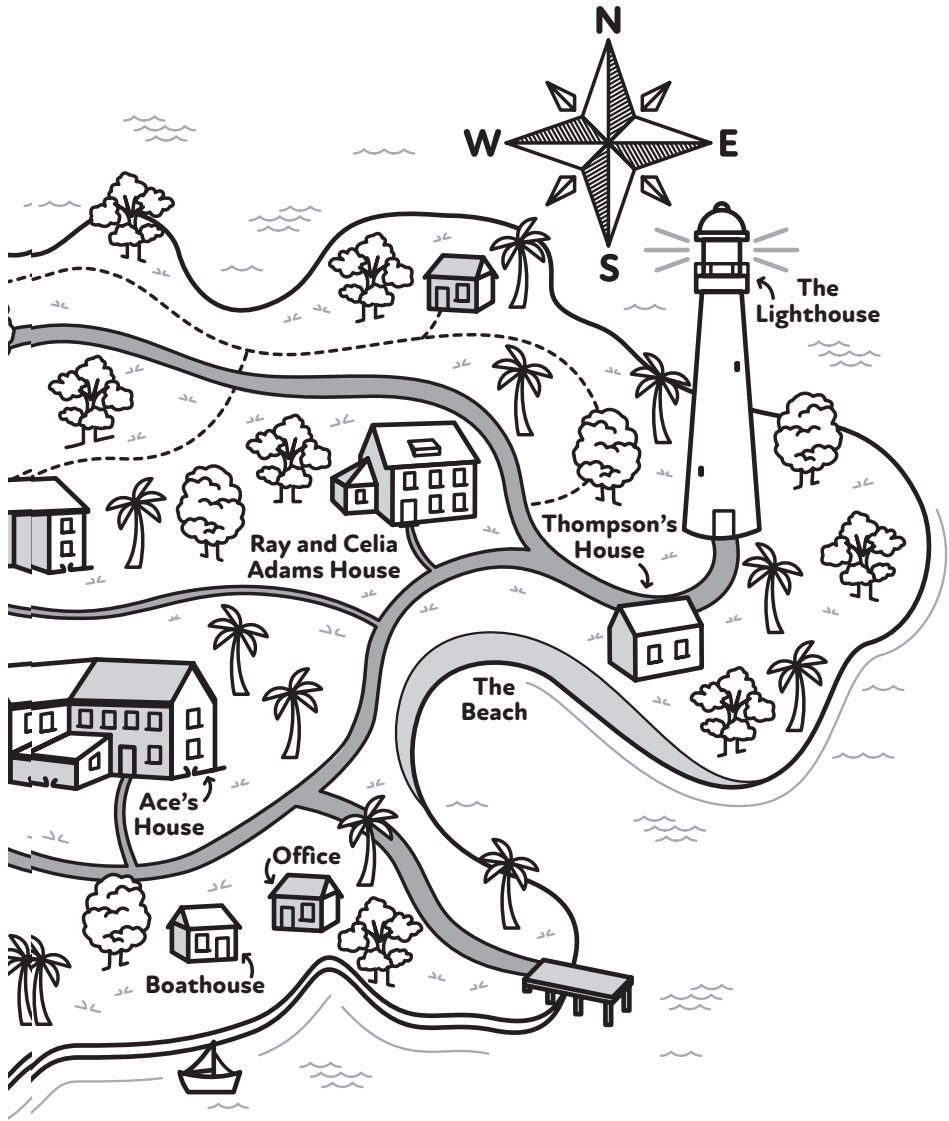
Mrs  
Hammond's  
House

Aaron and  
Omar's House

The  
Hut

Gaby's  
House

Tia's  
House



The Lighthouse

Ray and Celia Adams House

Thompson's House

The Beach

Ace's House

Boathouse

Office







## Chapter 1

“FAYSON!”

I rush in from outside, where Barry and I have been making faces at each other for the last ten minutes. As usual, he is in the car park on his bike, and I’ve been in my spot on the balcony.

It has become a game with us. We’ve gone from calling each other names to making faces at each other. “Wanna have a face-off?” he shouts, and we see who can make the worst face, to make each other laugh.

“I still don’t like you!” he shouts after me, as I run inside to find out what Mama wants.

“The feeling’s mutual!” I shout back.

I find Mama sitting at the dining-room table, the old laptop we both share open in front of her. She beckons me over, pointing at the screen.

“What is this?”

I peer over her shoulder, staring at the screen. She taps where an email is open. It’s from Uncle Edmond.

*Julie—it reads—just looping you into this.*

My eyes scan down to a message Uncle Edmond had pasted into the email.

*Dear residents of Lighthouse Island,*

*I would like to discuss the ‘detective agency’ the kids have formed recently.*

*I know they must get bored on a small island like this, but their behaviour*

*has really become a nuisance. While I understand they need something to do, I am proposing that we put a stop to this nonsense and encourage them to focus on something much less dangerous and problematic.*

*I think a meeting should be called to discuss this before it gets out of hand. Before they get out of hand.*

*Yours,*

*A concerned resident*

“Before they get out of hand’!” I mutter.

Mama tilts her head. “What do they mean, ‘dangerous and problematic’?”

I shrug, walking over to the fridge to hide my panic. “I don’t know, Mama,” I reply, opening the door and pretending to look for something. “All we’ve done is help people.”

There is silence.

I bite my lip, wondering whether I should keep staring into the fridge or turn to see

what Mama is doing. Curiosity gets the better of me and I turn.

She is glaring at me. “Fayson Mayor, if I find out you’re troubling those rich people...”

“I’m not, Mama!” I cry earnestly, realizing this could stop me visiting the island.

She narrows her eyes at me.

“I promise,” I tell her. “Maybe it’s someone from the crew playing tricks on us! They’ve done it before.”

She shuts the laptop. “Humph,” she says, before walking away.

I lean against the cabinet and grab a guinep from the fruit bowl beside me. I crack the shell with my teeth, while my mind races.

“Have you heard?” Tia says on our daily video call with Di Island Crew. “There’s an

email going round saying some people aren't happy with us pretending to be detectives."

Tia's been making a real effort since we left the island. At first it felt awkward; we had bad history with her. But it's been three months since we were last there together, and we've all been getting along.

The six of us nod.

"Papa wasn't happy," Aaron says, walking round his bedroom, looking for things to pack.

"He sat us down and asked loads of questions, like the FBI," Omar adds from his room, while playing computer games. He mimics his dad: *"Tell me or the cat gets it!"* and makes a whipping sound with his mouth.

I lie down on my bed, holding the phone above me. "Mama wasn't happy either," I tell them. "But do you know what makes me mad about the entire message?" I sit up. "That they said we were a nuisance.

“We’re not a nuisance! We are detectives. We solve cases. Very complicated ones.”

I glance out the window, where Mama is hanging washing over the balcony. This is one of her few days off. We’re about to go into town to do some shopping, but she wanted to get the washing done first.

“I don’t know why anyone would say that,” Gaby says. She’s sitting on the floor as her maid folds clothes into her suitcase.

“I thought everyone liked us.”

“Well, they don’t,” Tia says matter-of-factly. “Not everyone is going to like us, Gaby.”

I flinch, watching Gaby’s reaction. Her face falls. Tia has a way of saying things that doesn’t always come across as kind, and I know that must have hurt Gaby’s feelings.

“I know that,” Gaby mumbles, looking into the camera. “But we’ve done nothing wrong.”

“So that means one of the houses we gave our flyers to complained about us,” Ace says, lying on the floor next to his baby brother.

“Who cares?” Omar moans. “This is boring. Can we go to the cinema now?”

I stiffen. “Who are you going to the cinema with?”

“We’re all going,” Tia answers. “I wanted us to do something together, like the old times when we were back on the island.” She brushes her hair in the mirror, her phone leant on her vanity desk.

“It’s only because we all live so close,” Gaby tries to explain quickly. “If you lived in the city, you could come too.”

“But she doesn’t,” Tia says flatly. “You don’t need to pat her back like a baby. She’s fine. Aren’t you, Fayson?”

I clear my throat. “Yes, I’m totally fine. I have... very exciting... things to do myself.”

Tia stops brushing her hair and looks at me. "Like what?"

I try to think. "Just, you know... stuff. I've got to go; Mama's calling me."

"We'll see you on the island tomorrow," Gaby says gently down the phone. "It will be like we never left!"

I stand and fake a yawn. "Sure. Gotta go, bye."

I end the call and stand rooted to the spot. Then I sink back on to the bed.

Is this about us living in different towns, or is Tia trying to exclude me from the group? It wouldn't be the first time. It was obvious on my first visit to the island that she didn't like me. I thought we had moved past that when we invited her back into the group. But maybe not. I frown. Or maybe I'm overthinking it.

"Fayson, you not ready yet?" Mama asks, walking in with the empty basket under



her arm. "Didn't I tell you to be ready?" She walks out of my room and down the hall.

"But you were putting the washing out," I moan.

I hear a cupboard door shut. "So that should have given you enough time to be dressed and ready," she shouts from the hall. "And you still had time to wash up, but you nuh do dat neither."

I drag myself to my feet and walk into the kitchen, rolling my sleeves up.

Mama glares at me. She's already filling the sink with water.

"I'll wash up," I tell her.

She kisses her teeth. "Yuh too late. Next time do it before I ask, not when mi have mi hand in di sink already."

I groan inwardly and walk away. Mama has been really snappy over the last few days, ever since Uncle Edmond called to ask if I would come to the island during Easter break.



I listened from the living room sofa when Mama took the call.

I pretended to read the book in my hand, but really I was trying to

hear everything they were saying. Mama's voice immediately changed to cold and standoffish, so I knew it was Uncle Edmond. He is the only person she speaks to like that. She stepped outside on to the balcony, so I tiptoed over to the door to listen.

"Yes, I'm sure she will want to come to your island," she said stiffly. "What child wouldn't want to go to a private island with big houses and swimming pools and parties and all a dat." She rolled her eyes. "I never said yuh is showing off. I just don't want my child thinking your life is normal, becah it nuh normal, not fi we."

She looked up and locked eyes with me. I jerked back, hiding behind the wall, but it was too late.

“Fayson, I can see you. Go do yuh homework and stop listening to big people business,” Mama shouted. I ran into my room and closed the door.

She has not been the same since that phone call. In fact she’s been much worse than the other times I’ve prepared to go to the island.

In my room, I get ready for my day out with Mama. I slip on a pair of black shoes Aunty Desiree bought me. Then I change my mind, remembering the first and only time I wore them here.

“A wha dat?” Mama said, when I tried to wear them out.

I looked down at my feet. “Shoes.”

She glared at me. “I can see a shoes, Fayson, but where yuh get dem?”

“Aunty Desiree bought them for me,”  
I mumbled, suddenly feeling guilty.

Mama stared at them for a long time,  
then turned away. “She’s buying shoes for  
yuh now,” was all she said. I haven’t worn  
them again in front of Mama, and I know  
today is not the time to bring them back  
out.

Mama locks the front door, and we take  
the steps down to the car park. We walk  
across the grey tarmac, where a few cars are  
parked, and on to the busy main road.

It’s already scorching hot at eleven o’clock  
in the morning. The sun beats down on my  
back as we wait on the road for a bus to  
come by.

“Mama, did you bring water?” I ask,  
licking my dry lips.

She stares at me as though I just asked  
her for all her money. “Yuh big enough to  
be a detective on some island, but yuh not

big enough to bring your own water?” She fumbles in the big black bag she carries everywhere while I think of something smart to say back.

But she is right: as a detective who is now part of Di Island Crew, I should have my own water. These are detective essentials!

I have my phone for any photos I might need to take for evidence. I even have a small notepad and pen, and my detective books to read while Mama shops. But I don't have any snacks in case we get taken hostage somewhere and have to escape, or the most vital item: water. I would never survive a kidnapping without water!

I shake my head in disappointment at myself. I have to be more organized. I am a real detective now; these are all essentials I should not leave the house without.

Mama pulls out a bottle of water and hands it to me. I take it meekly.

She puts her hand out to stop a minibus hurtling towards us. It comes to a sudden stop just past us, and we run to catch up with it.

Someone slides the door open, and a bellow of loud music spills out with the few passengers getting off. The bus is only half full, which makes me happy because sometimes on a weekend it's so full I have to sit on Mama's lap and that's just embarrassing. Last time I was forced to sit on Mama's lap an old man shouted I was "too big for dat", and Mama should be sitting on my lap because she smaller than me, and the whole bus laughed.

"Where yuh want her to sit, on di roof?" Mama snapped back. But it had been the longest journey of my life.

We slide into an empty leather seat that crunches under us, and the driver speeds

off. I inhale the aircon blasting down from the ceiling, as the vibrations of the music thunder in my ears. My legs are already sticking to the seat and I peel them off, sitting forward so only my shorts touch the leather.

Mama doesn't say anything the whole ride, except to shout over the music to the man at the front collecting bus fare and hand him our money. Then she sits back and stares out the window, even though you can't really see anything because it's tinted.

I open my mouth to tell her about the rest of the group going to the cinema without me, but clamp my mouth firmly shut before any words come out.

*Stop talking about Di Island Crew, Fayson!  
Mama is sick of hearing about it.*

I twist my fingers into my lap, sticking my lip out as I try to think of all the things

I could talk to Mama about that won't mention the crew or the island.

I stare at the seat in front of me. The leather is torn, exposing the sponge inside. I wonder who would do that. Who would rip that open? I frown. Maybe someone was being kidnapped and they wanted to leave a clue, a note to where they were going? I stick my finger into the hole, rummaging around.

"Fayson, what are you doing?" Mama snaps. "Take your finger out of there!"

I pull my hand back. "I thought maybe there was a clue," I mumble.

She stares blankly at me with as much patience as she can muster.

"From a person who might have been kidnapped," I explain. "They could have left a note in there. It's the kind of thing detectives look out for."

Mama shakes her head, with a heavy sigh.



“Not this again,” she says, turning back to the window.

My heart sinks. I tried so hard to not talk about the island, but I failed.