

# A space-pirate saga

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Submerged in a black hole's subterranean sat a secret scarlet strongbox, stuffed with sapphires, silks, and shimmering splendour. But stories insisted the safe was a sepulchre for stellar sailors. Any soul who sought it was swallowed, silenced, and sealed away. Fates splintered, hopes snuffed.

Into that same celestial stretch sailed space-pirate Sebastian Silverville. Skillful, suave, and admittedly supercilious, he swore he'd secure the strongbox and return safe and sound. The sagacious warned him, "Those spoils spell sorrow. Be sensible, Silverville, or you'll sink into stories shrouded in sorrow."

"Silly superstitions," he scoffed, steering his spaceship 'Solarsail Supreme' into the stars. His first stop was Mars, where a sizzling shard suddenly sliced through Solarsail's skids. Sebastian spotted the source: Spindlesazz the Shardspitter, slithering into sight. Several strikes, stubborn stand-offs, and a sharp sidestep later, Sebastian split the space-monster into slivers. Smug and satisfied, he set off again, sure he'd soon



seize the scarlet box.

But Jupiter refused simplicity. The stratosphere shook: a snaking storm snatched the starship and spun it at supersonic speed. Stunned and scrambling for sense, Sebastian steadied his stance, just as the smog split and slammed Solarsail into Jupiter's surface. Shaken but standing, he spotted Smogmire the Cyclonic Sentinel. Instead of striking the storm-maker, Sebastian simply shoved the steering hard, and

sped away. Sometimes it's smarter to scoot than slay. Still snickering, he stopped at Saturn to snooze a smidgen. But Sirius, sky-sized and stone-skinned, sprang from the shadows and shot a searing star at him. Sebastian swerved the strike and studied the giant spectre, spotting a slim split along its spine. He shot down from the Supreme, swung his sword, and struck the soft spot. Sirius stilled, then scattered into stardust. On he sped:

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through Uranus' snowy sheets to spar with Sibbleblip the storm-flash serpent; through Neptune's swirling skies to subdue Squelch the shapeshifting slime. Success continued stacking in his skillful, splendid stride.

Finally, he saw the black hole. He slipped inside, smiling as he snatched silver sceptres and sapphires by the sackful. But the stories had spoken sense. No matter how he steered, struggled, or strained, the starship wouldn't shoot back out. His struggles stopped short; the celestial sink-hole swallowed him silently. And so, Sebastian Silverville, the sublime yet supercilious space-pirate, survives only as a story; a soft-spoken sentinel meant to steer children away from stubborn, swaggering sins. **GT**

(Bhavana is currently pursuing BTech CSE from SASTRA Deemed University, Tamil Nadu. She wrote this story using alliteration as a figure of speech.)



## The chime of the sea

Ananya Vashishtha

AIS Saket, XII B

The dark, slippery rock's floor  
By the sea's anguished roars  
Echoes with moans of the gore  
And tunes that the depths wore

Wretchedly grey clouds go by  
Like a wild call amidst cries  
Waters make mournful screams  
Making ancient towers lean

Great grief reflects in the sheen  
Of the pearls that oceans glean  
As if amidst her darkest fears  
Glint a maiden's woeful tears

Scripts written by nature's grace  
It echoes the words of the haze  
Dark waters cast a sinister smile  
While bitter winds doth beguile

These thickening mists over cliffs  
With their never-ending tiffs  
Long conspired with vicious rocks  
To lead all astray from the docks

Lurking around the timeless clock  
Fish swim like birds in a flock  
As if between the sky and the sea  
Lay a mirror with utmost clarity

As ships sail full of decadence  
Following the wind's cadence  
A deluge of ambrosia pours over  
And a deafening silence hovers

But an end to this darkness nears  
All hope do cloudy veils conceal  
The sun breaking the sea's misery  
Decorating it with glitter and glee.



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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Q.1</b> What is the name of Sebastian Silverville's spaceship as mentioned in the story on page 8?</p>      | <p><b>Q.2</b> Which dance form does T Reddi Lakshmi practice as stated in the interview on page 3?</p>         |
| <p><b>Q.3</b> Which dish has been referred to as 'India's timeless remedy' on page 5?</p>                         | <p><b>Q.4</b> Who became the first black woman to lead a crewed space mission?</p>                             |
| <p><b>Q.5</b> Which cause did the team of AIS PV champion during Youth Power 2025-26 as mentioned on page 10?</p> | <p><b>Q.6</b> Which tiny terminator caused the Black Death in 1346, as mentioned in this edition's poster?</p> |

**Winners 122**

Result of Read Play & Win: **Aviraaj Singh Bajaj**, AIS MV, IV A;  
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