

28. Diving In

by Margaret Hockett

A ¹I was standing before the lifelike painting of Phineus McGee fighting his battle at Pirate Cove. ²I could almost smell the sea and hear the cry of seagulls as I ran my finger over the white of his billowing sleeve. ³Out of that sleeve grew a sword, its edge gleaming in the sunlight. ⁴The opponent had a toothless grin and was about to plunge his sword into Phineus. ⁵My sense of justice (not to mention adventure) demanded that I join the battle! ⁶I would dive into the scene and fight as Phineus.

B ⁷Here's the thing about picture diving (a little-known art from the West Indies): you have to be confident. ⁸You stand back, focus on your target, and run. ⁹Diving into a specific *character* requires precision. ¹⁰I stood back, took aim, and ran.

C ¹¹"Arrrgh!" Red Rooster grunted in surprise. ¹²I had blocked his thrust so that his sword clattered to the deck. ¹³His hair matted with sweat as he dodged my own thrust and wrestled me for my sword.

¹⁴I summoned Phineus' strength as I cried, "I'll rip ya limb from limb, scurvy dog!" ¹⁵The stench of Rooster's fetid breath gave me extra willpower, and I shook him off. ¹⁶I staggered back and started thinking maybe this wouldn't be so easy. ¹⁷Now he was coming back at me with his sword! ¹⁸It was inches from my nose when I remembered. ¹⁹Phineus *died* in this fight! ²⁰If I didn't leave the picture now, I'd be killed.

D ²¹I panicked and searched my memory.



²²How could I dive *out*? ²³I was backed against portside as the ship swayed; the sea sloshed over the rail. ²⁴Water. ²⁵I got a flashback from my picture-diving instruction: "To return from your adventure, soak yourself in water."

E ²⁶If I could only buy some time! ²⁷But Rooster was about to bury his sword in me, and I closed my eyes for the worst. ²⁸The ship lurched. ²⁹Rooster lost his balance. ³⁰As I slid through the rails, my own sword snapped up just in time to scratch Rooster's cheek as he regained balance. ³¹"Me face, me face...!" was the last thing I heard.

F ³²Still feeling soaked, but thoroughly relieved, I stand again before the framed battle scene. ³³The oil painting looks much the same as before—or does it? ³⁴I look closely at Phineus' challenger. ³⁵Is it my imagination, or is that a new scar under his left eye?

DIRECTIONS: Choose or write the best answer to each of the following questions using the evidence presented in the passage. When required, list specific sentence numbers or paragraph letters from the story to support your answer.

1. How does sentence 2 give you a clue as to what might happen later?

 2. Explain what is meant by the figurative language used in sentence 3.

 3. In general, picture diving requires all of the following EXCEPT
 - A. confidence.
 - B. focus.
 - C. running.
 - D. precision.

List the numbers of the 3 sentences that best support your answer. _____, _____, _____
 4. Match each point of view to the character to whom it most likely belongs. Use each letter only once.
 - ___ 1. Phineus is a foe to be conquered.
 - ___ 2. I'm an outside observer.
 - ___ 3. I'm defending the captain's honor.
 - ___ 4. I must defend my ship.
 - A. Narrator before picture diving
 - B. Red Rooster
 - C. Captain Phineus
 - D. Narrator in the picture
 5. The word *fetid*, as used in sentence 15, most likely means
 - A. foul.
 - B. sweet.
 - C. encouraging.
 - D. inspiring.
 6. Why did a new scar appear on Rooster's face in the picture (sentence 35)?

- Give the number of the sentence that best supports your answer. _____
7. The main conflict in the story is between
 - A. Rooster and himself.
 - B. narrator and himself.
 - C. Phineus and narrator.
 - D. Rooster and narrator.
 8. The story could be classified as any of the following EXCEPT
 - A. fantasy.
 - B. nonfiction.
 - C. mythical.
 - D. adventure.
 9. Why was the narrator panicked in paragraph D?

- Give the number of the sentences that best support your answer. _____, _____