

Humpty Dumpty

Terrance sat down heavily on the soft couch in his living room. Sensing her husband's mood, his wife hurried in with a glass of ice-water and a biscuit. His job, of which he was very proud, was a guard up at the palace on the hill. He was one of the most important of the King's men. Now he was tired and wore a frown on his face like a mask. Sweat beaded on his forehead, and there was a tear in his eye. Not wanting to burden his wife with his problems, he stood up and took himself down to his garden shed for some peace and quiet.

What he didn't tell his wife was that he'd had a terrible day. Just before he'd come home, he'd spent the afternoon trying his hardest to fix an almighty problem. It was such a big problem that not only the King's men but also his horses had been called in to help. He could still see the mess now when he closed his eyes: the thick yellow goo growing sticky in the hot sun; the clear, runny liquid flowing down the cobbled road; the fragments of shell cast across the ground like stars in the night sky.

What he wouldn't tell his wife was how hard he'd tried to warn the poor soul just moments before he'd fallen. He'd called to him not to sit too close to the edge. It hadn't made a difference. The silly egg had been rocking and laughing in the summer sun until he'd rocked so hard he'd had a great fall. Splat!

What he couldn't tell his wife was that his day had started even worse. The night before, the King had held a royal ball. His Royal Highness had been desperately searching for a woman who had captured his heart. The ball was designed to entice her to him, and it was Terrance's job to find her. Unfortunately, as the clock struck midnight, the girl had fled into the night. Furious, the King had sent Terrance away to fetch him a loaf of bread.

What he won't tell his wife is that he often treats himself to a scrumptious croissant whenever he's sent to the bakery. She is worried about his waistline. That morning, he'd been distracted by his pastry. He hadn't noticed the egg who would later take a fall wandering in front of him. With



a bump, Terrance sent the egg stumbling into the path of a cart. “I do apologise,” Terrance had muttered as he’d dragged the egg to safety, just in time.

“That’s not a problem,” the egg replied with a smile. “It’s such a nice day, I’d hate to have ended it cracked under a cart!”

What Terrance might tell his wife, is that he’d had a cracking day, over-all.

INFERENCE

1. How is Terrance feeling in the first paragraph? How do you know?
2. How do you think he felt when he closed his eyes in the second paragraph?
3. Who do you think the girl was that the king had fallen in love with? Why?
4. Why don’t you think Terrance tells his wife about his day?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

V

Find a definition of the word “almighty” that fits in this context.

P

What would Terrance’s wife say if she knew about the croissants? Why?

R

What is Terrance’s job?

S

Tell the story of Terrance’s day, only this time, start at the beginning.

Answers:

1. Upset, worried
2. Scared, disturbed
3. Cinderella
4. He doesn't want to worry her

V: Large, enormous

P: She would be angry because she is worried about his weight

R: A guard for the king