

Improving Your Reading with Predicting Pip: Raider's Peril



Catanna ran through the darkness of the White Desert night. She rarely ventured to the Silken City, and never alone. Despite its soft-sounding name, it was a cut-throat place.

Katka's thumb ached from pressing the forward button as hard as she could. It wouldn't make Catanna move any faster – Katka knew that – but her thumbs wouldn't listen to reason right now. She had to find Xandon and discover what the Gutvines were up to, before they tricked her into destroying her own guild.

The hazy light of the distant city grew brighter by degrees. Catanna didn't look to the left or right; she just ran – over dunes, through tented encampments, under the shadows of enemy strongholds. She even splashed through an oasis without swerving; her eyes never left that hazy light.

That was how the bandits got her.

Suddenly, flaming arrows rained down from the sky. Her vision flashed red and she staggered as her health bar dropped.

She'd been hit. Unfamiliar voices jumbled on her headset.

"Taste it!"

"One more hit."

"Grab the bag."

Too late, Catanna readied

her spear. But Katka couldn't see who to aim at, and the spear flew, glittering, into the night, landing uselessly in the sand ahead. Catanna tried to follow it, but she was knocked to the ground by another blow. Her health was critical.



"She's out."

"Taste it!"

"Shut up and search the bag."

"Topaz, nice."

"Who uses spears anyway?"

All Katka could see was black. She pressed every button on the controller, but Catanna just lay there, her health bar blinking a warning. She was helpless as her lootbag was snatched away and the unseen assailants emptied its contents and flung it onto the sand. She heard every thud as they ran away across the desert.

Eventually, her health bar climbed above the danger zone and stopped blinking. Katka let out a breath that she didn't know she'd been holding. Catanna stood, picked up her lootbag, and looked at the contents. Just some useless armour, precision gloves, and something called an ice cloak.

Great.

Catanna shouldered the bag. All that Gutvine loot, gone in seconds because of Katka's own stupidity. Fantastic.

Catanna limped in circles, searching for her topaz spear. She remembered the exact spot it had landed in, but it wasn't there. The further that Catanna limped, the deeper her heart sank until it dropped right into her stomach. Her spear was gone.

Katka flopped back on her cool pillows. She stared at the ceiling, at the crack that wriggled across it like a road on a map. She was the leader of the Brittlestar guild; despair was not an option. She had to find Xandon and get back what she had lost. With a sigh, she sat upright.

Catanna joined a crowd of raiders, merchants and warriors as she limped closer to the Silken City gates. Guards stood on either side, their formidable weapons ready in case of trouble. Catanna stayed to the middle of the crowd, who jostled and slowed as they reached the

bottleneck.

As the bustling chatter and hanging silks of the city came into focus, Catanna was snatched to the side by a guard. The guard's animated face loomed down at Catanna, grinning. His teeth were black.

1. Do you think Catanna will venture to the Silken City alone in future?

Yes

No

Maybe

Fully explain your choice using evidence from the text.

2. What might Catanna do when she next travels through the White Desert?

Explain why you think this.

3. How do you think that Catanna will replace the items which were stolen from her lootbag? What makes you think this?

4. Who do you think has taken the topaz spear? Why do you suspect them?

5. Look at the paragraph beginning *Katka flopped back on her cool pillows.* Based on this paragraph, what do you think Katka is planning to do?

6. Write one line of dialogue to show the first thing the guard may say to Catanna.

7. How do you think Catanna will try to escape the guard?

8. Based on this extract from the story, what do you think will happen next in the plot?

9. Do you think the character of Catanna will change over the course of the rest of the book? Explain your answer.

10. What would you do next if you were in Catanna's position?

Answers

1. Do you think Catanna will venture to the Silken City alone in future?
Fully explain your choice using evidence from the text
Accept 'yes', 'no' or 'maybe', provided that the answer is fully explained using evidence from the text, such as: No, because Catanna ended up limping in circles and she lost her topaz spear. With no one to help her, I don't think she would try to venture to the Silken City alone again.
2. What might Catanna do when she next travels through the White Desert?
Explain why you think this.
Pupils' own responses, such as: I think Catanna might pay more attention next time she travels through the White Desert because she did not see her attacker coming this time due to being so focused on the Silken City.
3. How do you think that Catanna will replace the items which were stolen from her lootbag? What makes you think this?
Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Catanna will visit the bazaars and markets within the Silken City because she won't be able to last long and protect herself without replacing her stolen equipment.
4. Who do you think has taken the topaz spear? Why do you suspect them?
Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the bandits took the topaz spear because they were the only other people we know to have been in the White Desert at that time.
5. Look at the paragraph beginning *Katka flopped back on her cool pillows*.
Based on this paragraph, what do you think Katka is planning to do?
Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Katka is planning to find Xandon and take back what is rightfully hers.
6. Write one line of dialogue to show the first thing the guard may say to Catanna.
Pupils' own responses, such as: "Well, well, well, what do you think you are doing trying to enter the Silken City?"

Answers

7. How do you think Catanna will try to escape the guard?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think Catanna will try to wriggle free from the guard's grip and may try to hide amongst the people entering the Silken City.

8. Based on this extract from the story, what do you think will happen next in the plot?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Catanna will break free from the guard, continue to try and find Xandon so that she can defeat him and lead the Brittlestar guild to victory.

9. Do you think the character of Catanna will change over the course of the rest of the book? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: No, I don't think that the character of Catanna will change because she has been very determined and shown a lot of strength during this extract and I expect that she will continue to do so

10. What would you do next if you were in Catanna's position?

Pupils' own responses, such as: If I were in Catanna's position, I would try to distract the guard so that I could flee from him and hide amongst the market stalls within the Silken City.