

## Candara's Gift

*Candara's Gift* is the first book in a fantasy trilogy set in the magical Kingdom of Gems. The Kingdom has enjoyed more than 500 years of peace and happiness, but all this comes to an end when a menacing figure slips into the Kingdom under the cover of darkness...

The tall figure approached the woods with powerful strides. Just behind him, held on a metal chain which he shook every so often to keep it moving, was a great creature. As the darkly cloaked man and the creature moved, the plants nearby withered, their leaves falling to the dying grass, and flowers, so bright and beautiful the day before, drooped as if touched by invisible poisonous vapours.

Close by, and high up in an old oak tree, perched a snowy owl called Joog. [...]

Joog was meant to be watching. He was always particularly vigilant during nighttime as it was his job to guard the kingdom, but tonight, however, he had slipped into a deep and absorbing slumber leaving the kingdom unprotected and open to intruders.



The wild wind whistled and sighed through the trees. It swept across the kingdom from the west, like a curtain drawn at the end of the day and now it persisted deep into the night, swirling across the whole kingdom with a groaning presence. It seemed to herald the arrival of something unusual, bleak and unwelcome, something that forewarned of danger. In spite of this howling wind, however, Joog slept soundly and so did every creature in the Kingdom of Gems. Even the nocturnal animals were sleeping which was strange because during the dark hours of the night they were usually busy.

Then, as the dawn approached, the air seemed to grow weary of its swirling movements and the driving wind collapsed, like an exhausted wild animal that finally runs out of energy. But this was not a peaceful stilling, it was as if the air grew too heavy to be in motion any more, too thick to stir and its dreadful weight fell upon the land. The utter stillness that filled the kingdom, seeping into the very earth, was a brooding expectant atmosphere. The whole kingdom seemed to be wrapped in a weighty darkness, grave and intense, that awaited the arrival of something uninvited and unwanted.

Joog was still absorbed in a deep sleep.

Then a rustling sound, at first distant in the still air, but soon growing louder, broke the heavy silence. The shadowy figure, with the great creature following, was moving into the woodlands and striding steadily over the spongy leaf-strewn earth. Joog did not hear these approaching footsteps. He did not feel the strange sinister chill that had suddenly filled the air. He did not see the dark-cloaked figure far below him cross the border and enter the Kingdom. A Troubler had arrived.

1

Write down one feature of this text that shows it is an extract from a fantasy novel.

1 mark

2

What do you think the word "vigilant" (line 8) means? Check your answer in a dictionary.

1 mark

3

Find and copy one simile from lines 12-20.

1 mark

4

Why do you think that every creature in the kingdom "slept soundly" (line 18)?

1 mark

5

"the air seemed to grow weary" (line 21). This is an example of (circle one):

- a. personification      b. a simile      c. alliteration      d. onomatopoeia

1 mark

6

In lines 21-27, how does the author suggest that something bad is going to happen?

2 marks

7

The character who has just arrived in the kingdom is called a "Troubler" (line 34). Why do you think the author chose this name?

1 mark

8

How do you think Joog will feel when he wakes up? Give reasons for your answer.

2 marks

Total  
out of 10