

'Get a blooming move on!'

Dad's voice echoed through the tiny flat, sending shockwaves resonating through Trick Hope's body. The thirteen-year-old lay for a moment longer, thinking about the day ahead, before swinging his legs out from beneath the covers. He shambled to his feet, scratched and stretched. Hooking the vertical blinds aside, he peered out of the window. London sprawled before him.

Trick lifted the lucky pendant round his neck to his lips, giving it a swift ritual kiss before letting it fall back on to his chest. He sifted through the clothes on his bedroom floor for his school shirt and drainpipes.

After squeezing into the jeans, he tugged on the shirt – still buttoned from the night before – and slipped the knotted tie over his head like a noose.

He stepped into his once-white trainers, then walked over to the shelves beside the door. They were loaded with his comic collection, weeklies bought religiously from Super Freaks in Soho.

Trick wasn't looking at the comics, though. His focus was on the terrarium nestled between the piles of back issues. There was no movement within the glass tank; the foliage and webs were motionless. Shelob had clearly been hungry in the night, polishing off the last of her crickets.

'You'll be late!'

Trick rolled his eyes, making no attempt to quicken his pace. He shrugged his blazer on, the maroon sleeves threadbare from the various scrapes he'd got himself into over the years. Lifting the flap on his backpack, he checked the contents: a half-empty box of Tic Tacs, a tatty exercise book and a couple of biro. Hardly the ingredients for academic

success. Trick shrugged. What had school ever really taught him, apart from how to run and hide? He swung the bag over his shoulder and headed out of his bedroom.

#### Retrieving Information

- 1) Use a dictionary to find the definitions for
  - a) resonating
  - b) ritual
  - c) terrarium
- 2) Find and copy **one** word that shows that Trick's blazer is old.
- 3) Find and copy **one** word that shows that Trick never forgets to buy his magazines

#### Making Inferences

- 4) What type of creature lives in the terrarium and how do you know?
- 5) Why do you think Trick kisses his necklace?
- 6) Is Trick's room tidy? Give 2 pieces of evidence to support your answer.

#### Writer's Choices

- 7) Why has the writer chosen to describe the knotted tie as "like a noose"? What does this tell us?
- 8) Why has the author selected words like "shrugged" and "shambled" to describe how Trick moves?

#### Challenge Question (extended answer)

- 9) Describe what you think Trick might be like at school, using quotes from the text to support your answer.