

UnderSea

Carlos secured his SeaSpace helmet and checked his supply of harpoons. There were twenty in the sling attached to his SeaSpace suit. He hoped that would be enough for him to journey across the Coral Planet and through the lair of the OctoSnatchers. He needed to reach the space clam breeding grounds where he could collect enough asteroid pearls to refill his blaster.

Carlos knew that the journey would be dangerous, but he had help. Raider, his sea stallion, would help him get safely to his goal. That is if he could find him. Where was that pesky horse? He was always disappearing at the worst times. Carlos decided to set off through the Coral Forest and hope that Raider would catch up eventually. He usually did.

The Coral Forest was beautiful but dangerous. The OctoSnatchers had spies lurking behind every coral tree, waiting to report back to their masters about any trespassers they spotted. Carlos floated silently through the dense and colorful flora, trying not to make any sounds that would draw their attention.

Suddenly, there was a loud whinny as Raider swooshed up to Carlos's side. "Shh!" said Carlos. "They'll hear!" It was too late. Carlos saw the tentacles

of the OctoSnatchers' spies slithering through the space between the coral trees. They were on the move.

"Great," said Carlos. "Now they know we're coming." In answer, Raider nudged Carlos, encouraging to climb on the space stallion's back. He waved his fins, indicating that he was ready to swim fast. Carlos hoped Raider could swim as fast as he ever had before. They would need to be quick as a space eel if they hoped to get through the gauntlet of OctoSnatchers and make it to the sea clams.

Carlos climbed up on Raider's back and gave him a pat. "Ok, pal," he said. "Let's do this." Raider took off with another whinny. Carlos had to hold on with both arms so he wouldn't fall off. "Woohoo!" he screamed as they sped through the space waves.

They had almost passed the lair of the OctoSnatchers unharmed when a giant tentacle appeared before them. Raider turned left and then right, but tentacles appeared on all sides, writhing and reaching for Carlos and his stallion. Carlos launched his harpoons - eighteen, nineteen, twenty. They were all gone and his life force was fading fast. Raider whipped his tail behind him to fend off the last of the tentacles. They barely made it out alive.

On the other side of the lair, Carlos and Raider collapsed in a heap. They had done it. The sea clams around them opened and shut their shells in approval, offering their pearls for the taking.



Carlos drank a glug of galaxy-ade to revive himself and then gave some to Raider. The horse could be annoying, but he was loyal and brave. When Carlos felt better, he took out his blaster to load up the pearls. Another day in UnderSpace, another mission complete.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What is Carlos's goal?
 - a. To find his sea stallion
 - b. To climb the coral trees
 - c. To collect the space clam pearls
 - d. To drink galaxy-ade

2. What is the name of Carlos's sea stallion?
 - a. Raider
 - b. OctoSnatcher
 - c. Spy
 - d. UnderSea

3. Which of the following is probably NOT a reason that Carlos describes his sea stallion as loyal and brave?
 - a. He catches up with Carlos in the Coral Forest
 - b. He is nowhere to be found when Carlos sets out on his journey
 - c. He swims as fast as he ever has to get them past the OctoSnatchers
 - d. He whips his tail to fend off the enemies

4. Do you think the space clams are friendly? If so, what makes you think that?
 - a. They offer Carlos galaxy-ade
 - b. They spy for the OctoSnatchers
 - c. They live on the Coral Planet
 - d. They open and close their shells in approval

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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