The Lost Queen

Maria and Oliver are attending a party in the garden of a house that used to belong to Maria's family. They sneak away to explore the grounds.



Maria and Oliver were quite a distance from the party when they found the little rowing boat in the grassy shallows of a small lake beyond the garden.

Glancing nervously behind her, Maria suggested that they row out to the island in the middle of the lake. Oliver looked at her questioningly. Maria explained that there was a secret monument on the island to one of her ancestors. This was a woman who had married a prince at the time when there was a struggle for the throne. The struggle had been between two rival families – one had a lion as its symbol, the winner had a bear.

“Come on,” Maria said impatiently.

Oliver rowed while Maria stood barefoot in the boat, staring straight ahead. The oars made a click-clack sound in the hush and haze of the summer afternoon. Ripples of water fanned out behind them as they

crossed the glassy surface of the lake.

The tiny island, thick with creeping vines and roots, looked as if it floated. At its centre, an ancient oak tree towered over it. The tree's branches were like bent fingers, twisting and stretching outwards, until the tips of its leaves touched the still water. Oliver carefully steered the boat through a narrow opening in the branches. Then they stepped out of the boat, and into a murky green space under an umbrella of leaves. The air was cool and damp.

Maria led Oliver across the tangled ground to the hidden monument. It was a column of marble, weathered and mossy with age. A delicate crown sat at the top, and an inscription was carved into a flat slab at the base. Oliver used his thumbnail to scrape out the letters that were cut into it.

It was a name.

Maria's family name.

“You could have been a queen?” said Oliver, whispering.

Maria laughed gently in the gloom.

“We were the family of the lion,” she said.

Oliver could still hear the shouts and laughter of the party, up on the sunny lawn near the big house. But now the noise seemed to be getting further and further away.

1. Look at the paragraph beginning: *Glancing nervously...*

Find and **copy one** word meaning relatives from long ago.

_____

1 mark

2. *The struggle had been between two **rival** families...*

Which word most closely matches the meaning of the word *rival*?

Tick **one.**

equal	☐
neighbouring	☐
important	☐
competing	☐

1 mark

3. Look at page 1.

How can you tell that Maria was very keen to get to the island?

_____

_____

1 mark

4. Look at the paragraph beginning: *Oliver rowed...*

Find and **copy one** word that suggests that the summer afternoon was quiet.

_____

1 mark

5. *...they crossed the glassy surface of the lake.*

Give **two** impressions this gives you of the water.

1. _____

2. _____

2 marks

6. Look at the paragraph beginning: *The tiny island...* to the paragraph ending: *...were cut into it*.

What impressions of the island do you get from these two paragraphs?

Give **two**.

1. _____

2. _____

2 marks

7. Write down **three** things that you are told about the oak tree on the island.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3 marks

8. Which of these drawings best represents the monument?

Tick **one**.



☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1 mark

9. Look at the paragraph beginning: *Maria led Oliver...*

(a) Why did Oliver find it difficult to read the inscription on the monument?

_____

1 mark

(b) What did he have to do in order to read the inscription?

_____

1 mark

10. What was revealed at the end of the story?

Tick **one.**

Oliver was keeping a secret.	☐
The monument was damaged.	☐
The two families were still enemies.	☐
Maria's family did not win the throne.	☐

1 mark

11. Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	**False**
Two families fought for the throne.		
Maria's family symbol was the lion.		
The monument was for a prince.		
It was hot on the island.		

1 mark

1 mark