

## Eleven

What would *you* do? Jump for joy that your uncle was so clever? Go for him with your feet and fists? Say “I forgive you, Uncle Ernie. I know that your actions, though sadly misguided, arise from the best of intentions”? Would you beat the earth in anguish? Would you scream in pain? Would you howl with rage? Would you stamp and hiss and snarl and spit?

Stan? He did none of these things. The horror of the tin transfixed him. He couldn't move; he couldn't speak. Ernie cradled the tin in his hands and murmured about a golden future. Stan's eyes glazed over as his uncle talked of shop shelves stacked with gourmet goldfish tinned by Ernest Potts. He talked of diners nibbling Potts's Gorgeous Glittering Goldfish at The Ritz.

Annie went over to her nephew. She tried to hold him to her breast but he couldn't move. He was a statue. His heart beat to the rhythm of the tragic words of the thirteenth fish: *My companions! My companions! O my lost companions!*



Then Stan blinked, coughed, reached down and lifted his bucket.

“I think I'll go for a walk, Auntie Annie,” he said.

“A walk?”

“Yes, a walk.”

Ernie smiled. “Good idea, lad!” he said. “Stretch your legs. Clear your head. Get a breath of fresh air.” He winked at Annie. “See?” he said. “He'll get over it, won't you, lad?”

Ernie stepped aside as Stan brushed past him. He reached out to tousle Stan's hair. Stan turned his face to him.

“I'd rather you didn't do that,” he said quietly. He opened the front door.

“Stan?” called Annie. “Stan?”

“I'll be fine,” said Stan.

“See?” said Ernie. “Give the lad some time on his own. That's what he needs.” Then he had an idea. “Hey, Stan! You could go back to the fair. Get some more of those little beauties for me. Two tons or so should do it! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! Tinned goldfish! They'll knock sardines off the shelves! They'll topple tuna! They'll annihilate the anchovies! Tinned blooming goldfish! I'm a total wonder! I'm a fishy genius! Fame and fortune's just around the corner... Ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!”

Stan turned, took one last look at his uncle and aunt, and walked away.

Stan has walked away from Uncle Ernie and Aunty Annie. What do you think he will do and where will he go?

Your task is to plan the next part of the story.

Think about the following things:

- Where will he go - back to the fairground?
- Who will he see there - Mr Dostoyevsky, Nitasha, Gypsy Rose?
- What role will they play?
- Will he work for Mr Dostoyevsky on the Hook-a-Duck stall?
- Remember, the book is called *The Boy Who Swam with Piranhas*, how will you make the title link into your plan?
- What will happen to the thirteenth goldfish?

You might want to plan this using the story mountain format - if you have a printer, you could print it out. If you don't have a printer, then use paper to draw your own creative story mountain to plot the key events of your story.

# My Story Mountain

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

