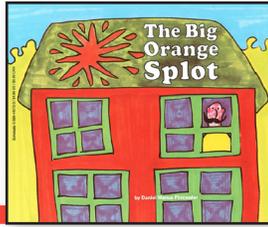


Insert the missing



Writing based on *The Big Orange Splot*, an original text by Daniel Manus Pinkwater

NARRATIVE WRITING PROMPT: Within the story *The Big Orange Splot*, Mr. Plumbean has an evening conversation with one of the neighbors. However, the author never reveals what they talked about. Write their likely conversation using details from the original text.

The neighbor went to talk to Mr. Plumbean. He was welcomed with blooming frangipani, swaying palm trees and a friendly alligator. After sipping his lemonade he asked, “Mr. Plumbean, what is going on with your house? We all have some concerns. You work all night long, your house is bright colors, and now you have an alligator!”

Mr. Plumbean smiled, taking a gulp from his glass, and responded, “Thanks for your concerns. I tell you that orange splot reminded me of the sunrise one morning during my honeymoon. My late wife and I went to Africa. Back then, I worked a steamshovel. The pay was good and Martha always wanted to see elephants some place where they were free to roam. So Africa was where we went. We actually saw a lion in the jungle. This massive feline looked right at me! It was the most incredible thing I have ever seen. Martha saw her elephants and heard them blow their trumpets. The sound echoed throughout the plain. We rested in hammocks and drank lemonade under the shade of palm trees. On the way back, we had a few days in London, so we got to see Big Ben.” Mr. Plumbean paused, taking a sip of his lemonade. “I always wanted to go back to that time. Since I can’t, I thought I would bring it to me.”

“That sounds like a wonderful trip.”

“It was,” Mr. Plumbean responded with his smile growing broader, stretching the tips of his handlebar mustache almost to his eyes.

“But that doesn’t explain your house,” said the neighbor. “We like living on a neat street. Your house makes our street not neat.”

“Well, there is not a day that goes by without me thinking about it. It seemed silly to only have it in my head—why shouldn’t I make my home into my dream vacation? A house of my dreams.”

“Well, I suppose you should,” the neighbor smiled, holding his glass. “Now that you mention it, there are many people on this street who love to travel. They have been to many places.”

“Really?” asked Mr. Plumbean. “It seems most folks here are more concerned about my mental well-being.”

“Well,” the neighbor chuckled. “There are the Smiths who went to Ireland and saw castles there. And the Browns went to India. My other neighbor went up in a hot-air balloon in New Mexico.”

Mr. Plumbean still smiled and asked, “And what about you?”

“My favorite vacation was when I took a trip on a ship,” the neighbor responded with his eyes looking longingly past Mr. Plumbean as he remembered that time. “The clean sea breeze against my face made me suddenly feel free from all my troubles—I knew how seagulls must feel. And the coral-blue ocean stretched out for as far as the eye could see. There was a sense of sheer wonder—what were all of the secrets this ocean held right under me? And there were dolphins bursting out of the water right next to the boat! They traveled next to us for a long time—they seemed as interested in us as we were of them. It is my favorite memory.”

“How often do you think about that trip?”

“Every day. If I could live there, I would.”

“Well, what’s stopping you from building a house of your dreams?” Mr. Plumbean took another drink.

The neighbor stopped, his eyes fluttered, “Really, nothing.”

“Then, I guess you better start working,” Mr. Plumbean held his glass up as if he was toasting the man.

“Yes,” the neighbor responded, smiling. “I guess I should. I’ll see you soon.”

By this time, it was early the next morning. He talked to Mr. Plumbean all night long! He set out to get lumber and nails and paint. Mr. Plumbean had inspired him to turn his house into a yellow ship. It looked perfect next to Mr. Plumbean’s house of his dreams.

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Text
evidence
marked
in red