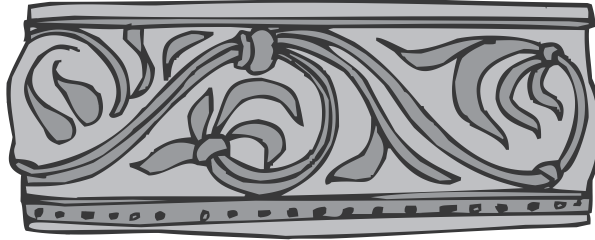


Practice on Your Own

Use the Notes column to take notes and use SALSA™ strategies.

The Studio Thief

Rudolph Santiago's studio was in a ramshackle barn on the artist's sprawling property. The padlocked door opened onto a crazy patchwork of tables and shelves overflowing with paints, brushes, canvases, chisels, hunks of stone, and scraps of metal. But beautiful paintings and sculptures stood out from the jumble like glittering gems. To Arthur, the teenager who spent Saturdays struggling to bring order to the chaos, the studio was breathtaking.



Word
Count

One Saturday morning, Arthur rode his bicycle to the studio, fed the cats under the barn, and went to open the padlock. The door was already open and Santiago was ransacking the place. “The bracelet!” he screamed, while flinging debris from the shelves. “It has disappeared!” He nervously ran paint-stained fingers through his thick gray hair and moaned. “How could this happen?”

131 words

Along with painting and sculpting, Santiago also crafted jewelry. The golden bracelet was his latest creation, designed to resemble a tangle of vines. It was priceless, and the patron who commissioned it was due momentarily to pick it up. This could be a major disaster. “It was right there when I locked up for the night,” Santiago bellowed. He turned to a battered worktable and tore through the papers, supplies, and knickknacks that covered it.

Arthur surveyed the cluttered table. “Are you sure it isn’t somewhere in this . . .” He desperately wanted to say “mess,” but held his tongue.

Santiago claimed, “I know precisely where everything in the studio is,” but Arthur knew that wasn’t true—and from the weakness of his voice, so did Santiago. He was slowing down now, as his nerves overwhelmed him. Yet the artist leapt to attention when Martin Grove invaded the studio. The customer greeted Santiago curtly and demanded the bracelet. “It’s very nearly complete,” Santiago stalled. “Perhaps if you returned in a few hours . . .”

170 words

Notes

Word
Count

Grove cut the artist off with a raised hand. “The bracelet is supposed to be ready now, Santiago, and I would like to have it. Now.”

Santiago seemed to crumble as he admitted the bracelet was missing. “It was on this worktable last evening,” he stammered, “and this morning, it wasn’t.”

“It’s hardly surprising something would go missing in this mess.” The artist winced as Grove cast a disdainful eye about the studio. “But I doubt you’d misplace my bracelet. Perhaps it was stolen?” His suspicious gaze settled on Arthur. “You’re not the only one with a key to that padlock, Santiago.”

Arthur started to respond, worried that the temptation to escape blame might be too strong for Santiago. But the artist refused to go along with Grove’s accusation. “Arthur loves my studio as much as I do and I trust him with everything in it,” Santiago sputtered, “including your bracelet.”

Arthur’s skin crawled. He realized both his and Santiago’s reputations were at stake. Together, they turned to the worktable and started hunting for the bracelet. “I’ve already searched the entire studio,” Santiago whispered. “I know you didn’t take the bracelet, Arthur, but Grove will make serious trouble for you unless we find it.”

204 words

Arthur heard Grove’s feet tapping impatiently, and felt Grove’s eyes burning into his back, when something occurred to him. Standing up, he paced along the studio’s edge, stopping in a dingy corner. “Santiago, look!” The artist rushed over, Grove looming behind him, to find Arthur pointing to a small hole in the wall. “I think I’ve solved the mystery.”

Santiago blinked uncomprehendingly. “I don’t get it,” Grove barked. “Is this some kind of a trick?”

“The hole leads outside,” Arthur explained. “Whoever—or *whatever*—took the bracelet came through it.” A knowing smile spread over Santiago’s face as Arthur led the men outside. Arthur crouched to look under the barn for the cats he fed that morning. One paint-stained kitten clutched a shiny toy in its paws that looked like a tangle of golden vines. Arthur retrieved the bracelet from the tiny studio thief.

“Thank you,” Santiago said after Grove left. Relaxing, the artist chuckled softly. “I suppose I ought to keep my studio a bit neater.”

177 words

“Don’t worry,” Arthur assured him, “I can be of assistance.”

- 1** The author uses the character of Martin Grove to
- (A) make the situation more amusing.
 - (B) create a feeling of sadness.
 - (C) resolve Arthur's problem.
 - (D) increase the tension in the story.

Skill *Characters*

- 2** Which choice **best** expresses the main theme of this story?
- (A) "To Arthur . . . the studio was breathtaking."
 - (B) "It's hardly surprising something would go missing in this mess."
 - (C) "Arthur loves my studio as much as I do and I trust him with everything in it . . ."
 - (D) "Whoever—or *whatever*—took the bracelet came through it."

Skill *Theme*

- 3** Which point of view does the author use in this story?
- (A) first person, with Arthur as the narrator
 - (B) first person, with Santiago as the narrator
 - (C) third person, limited to Santiago's point of view
 - (D) third person, limited to Arthur's point of view

Skill *Point of View*

- 4** The story is resolved when
- (A) Arthur becomes Santiago's assistant.
 - (B) Arthur discovers that the cats have the bracelet.
 - (C) Santiago admits that he should keep his studio neater.
 - (D) Grove accuses Arthur of stealing.

Skill *Plot*

- 5** The setting of the passage affects the story most because
- (A) the messiness of the studio builds tension by creating confusion about where the bracelet went.
 - (B) the studio is a beautiful place that Arthur admires.
 - (C) the bracelet disappeared during the week, when Arthur was not at the studio.
 - (D) it takes place on a sprawling property with a barn.

Skill *Setting*

- 6** Which statement from the passage is an example of a simile?
- Ⓐ "Arthur's skin crawled."
 - Ⓑ "[B]eautiful paintings and sculptures stood out from the jumble like glittering gems."
 - Ⓒ "Santiago seemed to crumble as he admitted the bracelet was missing."
 - Ⓓ "One paint-stained kitten clutched a shiny toy in its paws . . ."

Skill *Author's Use of Language*

- 7** At what point does this story reach its climax?
- Ⓐ Arthur arrives to find Santiago ransacking the studio.
 - Ⓑ Santiago has a chance to blame Arthur for the bracelet's disappearance.
 - Ⓒ Santiago warns that Grove will cause trouble unless they find the bracelet.
 - Ⓓ Arthur finds the bracelet with the kittens under the barn.

Skill *Plot*

- 8** Identify at least one trait that Rudolph Santiago possessed. Explain how this trait affected the events of the story. Use at least two examples from the passage to support your response.

Skill *Characters*