The Book Pirates Part 1

Agent Kahlo: Hola! Welcome to Stories by the Sea. Young art detectives who visited the library wrote stories inspired by this mural, which is called A Library of Knowledge.

Mary: Cor, that were quite the book haul, weren't it Billy?

Billy: It were, Mary.

Mary: I loves reading, me

Billy: Well, they don't call you Mary Read for nothing!

Mary: What you going to dig into first, then?

Billy: Well, this Secret Life of Plants has caught my eye.

Mary: Oh yeah?

Billy: I'm hoping it'll give me some tips to bring on my sunflowers.

Mary: They're definitely brightening up the poop deck, I'll give you that.

Billy: Yeah, but I reckon I can get them to grow much taller than they are at the moment. There's got to be a trick I'm missing. How about you, Mary? What are you going to read first?

Mary: I can't decide between Moby Dick, The Brothers Karamazov or 1984.

Billy: Tough choice.

Mary: It is. I mean, I wish we'd had more time to browse the bookshop, to be honest, but it was what it always has to be, a quick smash and grab.

Billy: Yeah. When the bookshop owner yelled "You dastardly book thief" right in my face I just panicked! I really didn't need this book on Weymouth Harbour. I knows this bit of the Dorset coast like the back of me hand already.

Mary: The lack of relaxed browsing time is definitely the main downside of being a book pirate.

Billy: I couldn't agree more.

Billy: Here, what's that?

Mary: What?

Billy: On that rock yonder, look. Pass me the telescope, will you Mary? I needs a closer look.

Cor, would you ever believe it?

Mary: What?

Billy: It's an octopus.

Mary: Basking is it?

Bily: No, I think it's….yeah…it's reading!

Mary: Octopi don't read, Billy.

Billy: Have a look if you don't believe me.

Mary: I stand corrected, Billy. That is, as you say, an octopus reading. And not just one book, by the looks of things. Seems like he's got a book in every tentacle.

Billy: I'm curious, Mary.

Mary: So am I. He seems harmless enough…yeah, turn the ship, Bill.

Billy: I'm on it!

(*Sound of wheel turning, sailing…the octopus telling a story fades into earshot)*

Octopus:

Slithering slyly through darkened streets
A fire dragon creeps on red-hot feet
Breath of flame and white-hot eye
A timbered house he soon espies

One mighty breath and the flames leap high
Sparks a-dancing in the night-dark sky
But who is this? Flying high?
The Water Dragon will extinguish the fire

Billy: Excuse me?

Octopus: Yes?

Billy: What you doing?

Octopus: Isn't it obvious?

Billy: You look to be reading.

Octopus: Well done.

Billy: We likes reading too.

Octopus: Excellent. Keep it up. Well, lovely to meet you and all, but if you don't mind, my student needs me

Mary: Who's your student?

Whale: I am.

Mary: There he blows! A blue whale!

Whale: I've always wanted to read, and Octopus is teaching me. They're incredibly intelligent.

Mary: I see you've plenty of books to choose from.

Whale: Yes, Octopus has a seemingly infinite supply.

Mary: Oh right, where's that then?

Octopus: Don't tell me you've not heard of a library.

Billy: I mean...I've definitely...heard of a library, have you Mary?

Mary: Yeah, yeah, absolutely heard about them, yeah.

Octopus: Well, there you go then.

Billy: But, like...can anyone go? To the library, I mean?

Octopus: Well they let me join, and I'm an Octopus, so...yes, I'd say so.

Billy: What if you had a bit of a...past like? Would they still let you join?

Octopus: What kind of past?

Billy: A kind of book-stealing past.

Octopus: So long as you promised to change your ways, I think they'd be prepared to overlook it.

Mary: And, what's the browsing like, at the library?

Whale: Unlimited, by all accounts. As boundless as the ocean is wide and deep.

Mary: Aw, imagine that!

Billy: Unlimited book browsing, now you're talking! Well, we won't take up any more of your time, thanks both!

Whale: Cheerio!

Octopus: Mind how you go!

Sounds of sailing.

Billy: Set a course, Mary Read.

Mary: Aye aye, Billy.

Billy: Next stop, the library!

The Book Pirates Part 2

Billy: Innit a great library, Mary!

Mary: Utterly fabulous, Billy. I tell you, seeing all these books is making my head swirl.

Billy: I got butterflies in my belly!

Mary: Yeah, right? It's just so exciting! Like every book is a portal to an adventure! What you got there then Bill?

Billy: It's called The Storm That Broke the Heart of the Sea.

Mary: Cor, that's a heck of a title, innit?

Billy: It is, yeah. So it's about an ancient shipwreck

Mary: Right...

Billy: It's been under the waves for like, centuries, and this octopus is living in it.

Mary: Fair enough.

Billy: Then this team from a marine museum, they comes along one day, they got divers, they got hydraulics, massive gurt nets...they got the works right?

Mary: Yeah...

Billy: And they lift the shipwreck!

Mary: What, like what they done with that Tudor ship the Mary Rose back in the 1980s?

Billy: Exactly that, yeah. And they put it in a museum. In an underwater exhibit.

Mary: Fancy.

Billy: Trouble is, the octopus has come with the ship.

Mary: What, they didn't spot the octopus?

Billy: No, he's hiding in this little cranny in the shipwreck, look, and before he knows it, he's out the sea and in the museum.

Mary: Well that's gotta be inconvenient.

Billy: Well you'd think, right? But actually, it turns out alright, because the octopus makes a friend.

Mary: Who with?

Billy: The night watchman.

Mary: Oh.

Billy: Yeah, so one night, this octopus sees this old watchman trying to change a lightbulb. But he can't quite reach. He's not as young as he was, see, he hasn't got the flexibility and stretch in his spine no more.

Mary: It can happen.

Billy: So the octopus steps in. Cos he's got all these suckers right? So he takes the lightbulb in a tentacle, and he just shimmies up the wall and across the ceiling, quick as you like, and changes the lightbulb.

Mary: He didn't need a stepladder or nothing?

Billy: No, cos he's got these gravity-defying suckers.

Mary: Well that's good, innit. So why did it break the heart of the sea?

Billy: What?

Mary: You said it's called The Storm That Broke the Heart of the Sea.

Billy: Oh yeah, so that's part 2. I've not read that far yet. Do you wanna take a look?

Mary: Yeah, alright.

(*Sounds of page turn)*

Mary: Right, so it says here the museum team also found a gold ring in the shipwreck. And they could work out without too much trouble that it once belonged to the Captain of the boat.

Billy: How did they know that?

Mary: Says here it was a very distinctive and famous ring. Had an inscription going around it saying "Keep me always on your hand, over the waves not over the sand." So…

(Page turn)

Mary: Yeah! So because of this, the captain NEVER went on dry land!

Billy: What, never?

Mary: No, says here, even if his ship were in a port, or moored off a desert island or something, the crew would go ashore, but the captain would ALWAYS stay on the boat, so the gold ring was always over the waves not over the sand.

Billy: That's commitment, that is.

Mary: Right? That's how they know it was this particular Captain's ring. People wrote ballads and drew pictures of this Captain what never went on dry land. So as to keep himself and his crew safe.

Billy: Ah, I see.

Mary: Then one day, the Captain is out on deck, and he spies a turtle.

Billy: Oh?

Mary: Says it was massive. Like those big'uns Charles Darwin allegedly rode about on.

Billy: Crikey.

Mary: And the captain is so excited he pointed to the turtle and he's going "look! Look!" like that, to the crew…and his gold ring only goes and falls off into the sea.

Billy: I bet he was livid.

Mary:…umm it doesn't say how he reacted, actually, but I imagine so, yeah.

(*Page turn)*

Mary: Blimey, it gets worse!

Billy: Oh yeah?

Mary: So this giant turtle, is only a decoy, innit?

Billy: Oh, that's underhand.

Mary: Yeah, sent ahead to distract the crew.

Billy: Sent by who?

Mary: This gigantic Kraken.

Billy: Uh oh.

Mary: Exactly, that's how the ship sank, they reckon. Clawed down to the watery depths by a massive kraken.

Billy: Nasty. What happened to the crew?

Mary: They managed to make it to a nearby island on a raft hastily fashioned from shards of the shipwreck.

Billy: I hope we never have to do something like that.

Mary: So do I, Bill. Your knot-tying is terrible.

Billy: Oi, there's no need for that.

Mary: Sorry. Here, do you wanna find out how it ends?

Billy: Yeah, alright.

(Page turn.)

Billy: So it concludes with saying They call it the Storm that Broke the Heart of the sea because…oh wait, That WAS THE NAME OF THE SHIP!

Mary: Eh?

Billy: The ship what sank, it was called "The Heart of the Sea"

Mary: Ohhhh, I get it now. That's a good name for a ship.

Billy: Our ship name is good too.

Mary: What, Sunflower?

Billy: Yeah! It's a good name. Anyway, you can't change it now. It's bad luck to change the name of a ship.

Mary: Who told you that?

Billy: Everyone knows it, Mary.

Mary: I've never heard that before.

Billy: Yeah, it's a thing. Here, where's the reference section? I'll look it up, prove it to you….

(*The Book Pirates mutter off, arguing.)*

Agent Kahlo: You've been listening to Stories by the Sea. Remember, there's nine listening stations in this sound walk. Where might you go next?