

The Decider



“It’s over, Doctor Magneto.”

A scrawny man dressed head to toe in purple spandex turned his head slowly. One of his hands was tightly gripping the overhanging rock above his head. The other was inching slowly towards his utility belt.

“Don’t do it, Doctor. I’ve got you surrounded.” A tall, brawny man stood on the damp floor of the vaulted cave. One hand was resting on his hips in a classic superhero pose. The other held a flaming torch that bathed both of them in a flickering pool of light. A gentle breeze played with his long, golden hair.

Doctor Magneto looked around, from the ground to the ceiling far above them. “There’s nobody else here, Professor Amazing,” he said through gritted teeth.

“It’s a figure of speech!” Professor Amazing shouted angrily.

“You’ll never catch me!” Doctor Magneto swung on the ledge and grabbed hold of what turned out to be an angry bat. He shrieked and tumbled to the ground. Shadows engulfed him.

A purple flash sprang out of the darkness and darted towards the professor. He’d been expecting it though and swivelled out of the way. There was a heavy thud. Professor Amazing shook his head sadly as he watched Doctor Magneto dust himself off and rub his head where he’d crashed into the wall.

“This is getting ridiculous,” Professor Amazing said. “You’ve been evading me for three years now.”

“And I’ve been getting away with it!” Doctor Magneto said proudly.

“Until now. You do know there’s only one way we can settle this forever, don’t you?”

Doctor Magneto took a deep breath. He nodded slightly.

“If I win,” Professor Amazing continued, “it will all be over for you. You understand that?” Another nod. “If you win, you’ll be able to continue your plans for world domination, and I’ll leave you alone.”

Doctor Magneto stepped forward suddenly. Professor Amazing flinched but realised his nemesis was holding out his hand. He shook it firmly. “It’s been an honour,” said the evil doctor.

“Any last words?” asked the professor.

“You need a better catch-phrase.”

“What’s wrong with ‘You’ve been caught by Professor Amazing’?”

“It sounds too much like a TV advert.” The doctor thought for a moment. “Maybe something like ‘There’s only room for one Amazing’.” He thought again for a second and said, “Maybe not. But work on it. It’s pretty terrible.”

“Fair enough. Is that it?”

“Will you pass on a message to my dear old mum?” Professor Amazing nodded, and Doctor Magnetor continued, “Tell her to send me my sonic blaster hidden in a birthday cake. It will help me escape.”

“No,” said Professor Amazing, flatly. “Let’s get this over and done with. I don’t want to drag it out any longer.”

The two men cautiously approached each other. “Are you sure you’re ready for this?” Professor Amazing asked.

“Get on with it.”

“Okay.” Both men held out their right hand in a tensely curled fist. They raised them together three times and muttered under their breath, “Rock, paper, scissors...” Each of them opened their hand at precisely the same time.

VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. What is a pose?
2. What does “Shadows engulfed him” mean?
3. Find a word that has a definition closest to “trying to avoid or not be found”.
4. Which word tells you how Professor Amazing shook Doctor Magnetor’s hand?
5. What does the word “cautiously” tell you about how they felt as they approached each other?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

I

Why does the purple man talk through gritted teeth near the beginning?

R

What did Doctor Magnetor grab hold of?

S

What did Doctor Magnetor do after he raced towards Professor Amazing?

I

How do you think they settled their argument?

P

Write the next paragraph in the story. Think about what might happen.

Answers:

1. A position that somebody is holding
2. He was swallowed by the shadows/they covered him completely
3. Evading
4. Firmly
5. They didn't trust each other not to do something

I: He is holding on to the ledge tightly

R: An angry bat

S: He bumped his head on the wall

I: Rock, paper, scissors

P: Any suitable prediction that links back to the game.