

Lob's Girl

Joan Aiken

Some people choose their dogs, and some dogs choose their people. The Pengelly family had no say in the choosing of Lob; he came to them in the second way, and very **decisively**.

It began on the beach, the summer when Sandy was five, Don, her older brother, twelve, and the twins were three. Sandy was really Alexandra, because her grandmother had a beautiful picture of a queen in a diamond tiara and high collar of pearls. It hung by Granny Pearce's kitchen sink and was as familiar as the doormat. When Sandy was born everyone agreed that she was the living spit¹ of the picture, and so she was called Alexandra and

10 Sandy for short. **A**

On this summer day she was lying peacefully reading a comic and not keeping an eye on the twins, who didn't need it because they were occupied in seeing which of them could wrap the most seaweed around the other one's legs. Father—Bert Pengelly—and Don were up on the Hard² painting the bottom boards of the boat in which Father went fishing for pilchards.³ And Mother—Jean Pengelly—was getting ahead with making the Christmas puddings because she never felt easy in her mind if they

decisively (dĭ-sĭ'sĭv'lē)
adv. in a clear, definite way

A SEQUENCE

What clue words signal the first important event?

ANALYZE VISUALS

What can you **infer** about the dog based on the details in the image?

1. **the living spit:** an exact likeness, often worded as “the spitting image.”

2. **Hard:** a landing place for boats.

3. **pilchards** (pĭl'chərdz): small fish similar to sardines.