

Seeing the Unseen

Seeing the Unseen

Did you ever hear the story of Pip and the old stone wall? This is a good one, because Pip discovered he had yet another superpower. But, let's hear the story from Pip.



Written and Illustrated by Pip

I'm sure I saw something move. It disappeared into the shadows by the old rock wall. That's just too close to my tree, thought Pip. I have to explore this mystery.

Pip moved silently through bushes and along the old stone wall. Though he knew the woods, every step was carefully placed so as not to be discovered. Rocks large and small formed the old stone wall that was barely knee-

high in some places, and in others he had to climb to get over it. The gray-green lichen and moss covering many of the rocks was a reminder that the wall had been there for many years. Perhaps this was once the border of a field that had been farmed. Woods had grown around and through the old wall. The trees were so high that Pip could climb them and see great distances.

He had a favorite tree. One of the largest, though not so big that the trunk and branches made it hard to climb. Sure, he got sticky fingers at times as it was a pine tree, but it had the best placed branches for climbing. And, whatever he had seen was near to his favorite climbing tree.



There! Something small is moving in the shadows at the base of the stone wall. Though sunlight was dimmed by the thick green foliage high above, he saw an opening between some larger stones in the old wall. Not so big he

could crawl into it, but certainly large enough to reach into the black hole.

I can't see anything in the hole and I don't hear anything either, thought Pip. Maybe I can get a small stick and reach in and poke around a bit. He looked for a nearby stick.

"Uh, uh, Pip. Not a good idea," a rough and gravelly voice muttered.

Pip spun around looking for the source of the voice. It was familiar but sounded so very different. Not seeing anyone, Pip quietly asked, "Is that you, Woody?" The reason being is that Woody blended so well into the woods as to be nearly invisible. Pip had to really focus to see Woody. Anyone else, well, they couldn't see Woody unless Woody wanted to be seen.

"Yes, it is," replied the gravelly voice.



"I don't see you. And, your voice sounds very different." Woody's voice usually sounded like a blustery wind rustling the leaves high atop the trees. Yet, this voice almost sounded like rocks rubbing against each other.

"I'm in front of you. Look closely at the wall."

Pip studied the wall and then noticed a smooth rock with two dark eyes and a mouth.

"Woody, you turned into a rock," said a very surprised Pip.

"Sometimes I go to great lengths to prove a point to you, Pip," said the gravelly voice. "You were about to reach in and poke a stick into the hole. One of my forest friends lives in that hole." After a thoughtful pause, Woody continued, "Let's imagine the hole in the stone wall is your home and a giant ogre is about to poke a very big stick into your home. How would you feel?"



It didn't take but a moment before Pip replied, "I think I would be scared of being hurt by that big stick. If the ogre's hand reached far enough into the hole, I might try to hit it or even bite it."

"Can you explain what you have just done," asked Woody.

After some thought, Pip replied, "I was trying to think and feel like the creature living in the hole in the old stone wall." Pip paused and continued, "So, I was pretending to be someone else by imagining that I'm in their spot. That helps me to figure out what they would do next. Ah, now that I think about it, it's almost like trying to read their mind by seeing through their eyes. It's a real superpower."

"A real superpower it is," rasped Woody. "I have another question for you. Do you know why I am a rock in the old stone wall?"

"I think you want to feel what it's like to be a stone wall and to be a home for the animal that lives there."

"Again, a very good answer, Pip. There are many different ways to try and learn the same thing." said Woody. "So, do you still want to poke that stick into the hole?"

"Nope. I think I will just sit quietly near the hole and blend into the woods." Pip did just that and in a very few minutes he was rewarded. He saw a furry little creature hop from the hole.

Now, it would be quite easy to tell you what Pip saw. Instead, I will ask you a question. What do you think Pip saw? I'll give you a hint. Remember the hole was big enough to put his arm into but too small that he could not crawl into it. Remember that he saw a small furry creature

hop from the hole. Need another hint? For this you will need to use a superpower, your ability to read. Look for a book that talks about furry animals that can jump and might live in a little hole, perhaps a hole in an old stone wall.



I bet you are also wondering about Pip's newly found superpower. You know, the one where he tries to understand how someone else feels and thinks. Well, that is called empathy. Empathy is a very powerful learning tool. It helps you to learn about others. Like reading, you have to work at it to develop it. How do you develop it, you ask. Have you ever noticed that when you read a really good story about a person, you begin to feel what they are feeling. It's almost as though you can see through their eyes. That's empathy. Reading helps to develop empathy.

Both reading and empathy are powerful survival skills, superpowers that you can develop.

Inspired by Lucas's adventure

Seeing the Unseen © 2025 by Philip Callahan is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

Allows you to copy, redistribute, remix, and adapt the material for any purpose, even commercially, as long as you provide proper attribution to the original creator and share any derivative works under the same license. This license promotes sharing and collaboration while ensuring that original creators receive credit for their work.