

The Oblong Crate by E.A. Poe

Name _____

Read the following passage from taken from *The Oblong Crate*. Select the correct answer for each question. Answer the last question in paragraph form.

"Four days later, we reached land- more dead than alive. When we recovered, we went our separate ways to New York.

About a month later, I happened to meet Captain Hardy. Of course we talked about the sad fate of Wyatt. That is how I learned what really happened.

It was true that Wyatt had reserved rooms on the ship for his wife and himself, his two sisters, and a servant. But on the morning of June 14th, his wife became very sick and died.

The young husband was frantic with grief. But he could not put off his trip. He had to take his wife's body to her mother, who lived in New York. But many people are superstitious about traveling with corpses. Captain Hardy knew that few of his passengers would agree to sail with a dead body on board. So he arranged to have the corpse packed with a large amount of salt in an oblong crate. It would loaded on board as if it were cargo.

Nothing was to be said about the woman's death. Most of the passengers knew that Wyatt had bought a ticket for his wife. So someone had to take her place during the trip. The dead woman's maid agreed to do this.

The room reserved for the maid was not canceled. This was where the maid slept each night. During the day, she played the part of the wife. This was possible because the passengers had never seen the wife before.

I wish I had not been so curious about the oblong crate. I wish I had not been so quick to speak to Wyatt about it. I no longer sleep well at night. There is a face that haunts me. There is a wild laughing that will ring forever in my ears."

1. Nothing was announced to passengers about Mrs. Wyatt's death because
A) they would want to through her overboard B) Mr. Wyatt couldn't talk about it C) it would cause passengers to become uneasy
2. The body was to be taken to
A) New York City B) New York C) South Carolina
3. It was easy for the maid to imitate the wife because
A) ~~as~~ one had ever met the wife B) she knew Mrs. Wyatt well C) Mr. Wyatt was falling in love with her
4. The narrator was ashamed he had asked about Mr. Wyatt because
A) he felt guilty about asking about Mrs. Wyatt B) he felt guilty about asking about the crate C) he felt guilty about Wyatt committing suicide
5. Why would Wyatt place the crate in his room on the ship? (give 3 good reasons)