1.- \*\*What happens in the story?\*\*

The narrator recalls a college friendship with Q, a seemingly perfect person. Years later, at a hotel pool, he overhears Q, now a TV executive, delivering bad news to an actress about her being dropped from a project. The woman throws Coca-Cola at Q, splashing the narrator. Q doesn't recognize his old friend. The story is framed by a metaphor about a failed kingdom and indifferent fish in a stream, suggesting the irrelevance of human social structures.

2.- \*\*What is the theme?\*\*

The story explores the inevitable failure of perfection and social facades. It examines how time transforms people and relationships, turning genuine connections into hollow professional interactions. The theme suggests that human constructs—whether kingdoms, friendships, or perfect personas—ultimately fail, while life continues indifferently, like fish in a stream unconcerned with political systems above them.

3.- \*\*Does it propose other interpretations, in addition to the literal one?\*\*

\*\*5\*\* (Totally agree)

4.- \*\*If the above question was affirmative, Which interpretation is it?\*\*

The "kingdom that failed" serves as a metaphor for Q himself—once a splendid, perfect person who has degraded into a corporate mediocrity. The fish represent the narrator's detached observation, unaffected by Q's fall. The story also functions as commentary on Japanese corporate culture and the entertainment industry, where sincere human connections dissolve into transactional relationships, and former ideals become empty gestures.