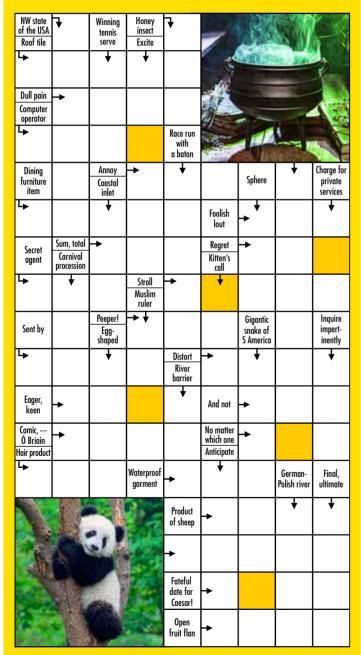
Picture POINTER

Write your answers to the word and picture clues in the direction shown by the arrows.



FINISHED? Now, from the top, list the letters in the yellow squares for the winning word! Write it on the entry coupon, enter online, phone or text. See page 57 **Our Lives**

Having a KILLER whale of a time!

What started out as a peaceful trip left us fearing for our lives. By Janet Morris, 58

s I sat down with my husband, Stephen, I said: 'What do you think about booking a last-minute holiday?'

'Great idea,' he replied. We both loved getting away whenever we could, especially when it involved sailing.

It had been my hobby for over 30 years, and I was part of a club which sailed from the south coast.

That evening, we browsed some holidays.

'How about this one?' I said. 'It's a seven-day training course with a sailing school.

It set out from Gibraltar in the Mediterranean, and from there we could go on to Morocco, Spain, and Portugal.

'Wow, it looks perfect!' Stephen replied. 'Let's do it.'

It had been a while since either of us had brushed up on our sailing skills, and I welcomed the practical experience.

So we booked our trip, and a month later we flew to Gibraltar.

When we landed, we headed to the harbour where our boat and crew were waiting.

As we approached the 46-foot Bavaria yacht, we stood in awe.

'What a beautiful boat!' Stephen said.

We made our way onboard, where we were greeted by our captain Greg and the four other crew members.

Everyone was different ages and had a variety of skills, and the plan was to sail around the Mediterranean then into the Atlantic.

On the first day, we got accustomed to life on the boat and ensured we knew our duties.

We had a rota to make sure two people were always on watch to keep an eye on the conditions, and on day two, Stephen and I were on night-watch duty.

But as we set off, the sea grew rougher.

It was windy, and the waves were really choppy.

It was still safe to sail, so we persevered — but I said



to Stephen: 'I think I'd better take a seasickness tablet, just in case.'

After we'd spent time on deck, we headed down to our cabin for a nap ahead of our night-watch shift, just seven miles off the coast of Tangier, Morocco.

But I'd barely drifted off when I awoke to the sound of banging on the side of the hull.

'What was that?' I said, sitting bolt upright.

We heard crew members shouting and then Captain Greg called out: 'All hands on deck!'

Stephen and I scrambled to our feet, then rushed to the top deck and peered over the side.

I couldn't believe my eyes. A pod of orcas — also known as killer whales

- was circling the boat. There must have been around seven of them. It was

rare to see them so close. But as majestic as they were, they were also

extremely dangerous. We're sitting ducks! I thought, feeling fear rising up inside me.

The orcas began ramming the boat and we quickly realised they could sink us.

In all my years at sea, I'd never experienced anything so terrifying.

But we all knew any panic could spread

throughout the boat and make things worse, and we didn't want to attract even more attention.

'Turn off the engine,' Greg instructed. 'Everybody try to keep calm.'

We hoped that if we didn't make any noise, the whales would retreat.

Greg could sense how petrified we were, but we kept as still and quiet as possible, even while the winds rocked against the

'I've radioed the coastguard — can we check the life raft is ready to use?' Jason, one of the crew members asked.

Minutes felt like hours, and

at one point we spotted debris in the water, which the whales had broken off from the boat.

After around 40 minutes, the orcas retreated.

But it wasn't long before they were back — and this time, it looked like there

were more of

'Grab your valuables and passports in case we need to abandon ship,'

Iason told us.

keep calm'

We sat tight and did our best to remain calm as the whales battered us for an hour. Then, to our great relief, they finally gave up and swam away.

We all breathed a sigh of relief as the captain started the boat back up.

But the steering had been damaged during the attack, so we needed to head back to Tangier.

It was only when we docked and got off the boat, that we realised the debris we'd seen were pieces from

the rudder. We'd had such a lucky escape.

'After that, I think we've all earned ourselves a nice dinner!' Stephen said.

We went to the nearest restaurant, and it was only as we started chatting that we realised just how dangerous the situation had been.

'You all did so well keeping calm,' Greg said. 'Things could've easily gone very south if you hadn't.'

Unfortunately, the damage from the attack meant we had to cut our trip short, so we returned home to Cambridge five days early.

Thankfully, the sailing school invited us back a few months later so we could finish the course.

This time, we headed in the opposite direction towards Spanish waters.

There were a couple of nerve-wracking moments especially when we spotted some fins and, for just a few seconds, thought the killer whales were back.

But it turned out to be a pod of dolphins.

We won't let those experiences put us off doing something we love.

We'll always enjoy being on the water, and having a whale of a time!