The Dragon Hawk

Every day the farmer came into the chicken yard and sprinkled chicken feed on the ground for the chickens. And every day after the farmer left, the mice darted out and grabbed the bits of corn and ran off with them back down into their holes. This made the chickens mad. But it made Vincent maddest of all. “I have got to stop those mice,” he would say, as he pecked around in the dirt looking for bugs to eat. “I hate having to eat bugs when the farmer is throwing down that feed for me!” But the other chickens only laughed at him. “What are you going to do?” they jeered. Vincent was the smallest rooster in the chicken yard and nobody was afraid of him, least of all the mice. “I don’t know. But I am going to do something,” Vincent vowed.

Every day he watched the farmer come and go, and he watched the mice come and go. He watched the mice all day. He saw the way they scampered. He saw the way they made themselves almost completely flat to squeeze through a crack in the barnyard wall. He watched the way they flew into their holes whenever the shadow of a passing hawk swooped across the barnyard. The mice, he quickly realized, were terrified of hawks. This gave Vincent an idea.

The next day, when the farmer was gone, as the mice were gathering up chicken feed amongst the clucking, pecking chickens, Vincent made an announcement. “Last night I saw a dragon hawk in the yard,” he said. Everyone, chickens and mice, looked up at him. “What’s a dragon hawk?” someone asked. “It’s half dragon, half hawk. It’s far more dangerous than a regular hawk.” The mice trembled. Even the word “hawk” struck fear into them. “Dragon hawks are ferocious eaters,” Vincent continued. “They are tireless hunters. Once they arrive at a place they never leave…until there is nothing left there to eat.” He paused for dramatic effect. And then he added: “And they only eat mice.”

Just then, much to Vincent’s secret delight, a real and unusually large hawk shadow slid across the group of chickens and mice. The mice squealed with fear and darted away, leaving the chicken feed behind. They ran out of the chicken yard and back into the farmhouse, where they took up permanent residence and never bothered the chickens again. That morning, and every morning after, Vincent ate chicken feed until he thought his stomach would burst.
Below is a diagram showing different feelings Vincent has, and character traits that Vincent displays in the story. On the lines above each one, write a few lines about what Vincent is doing in the story that displays that particular feeling or trait.

1. Observant

2. Determined

3. Satisfied

4. Clever

5. Annoyed

6. Delighted

7. Imaginative