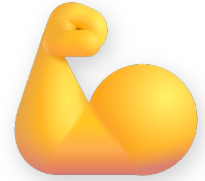




Read the fable carefully. Then answer each question below in a full sentence.

Think about what the character learned and what lesson the fable is teaching.

Elara and the Storm's Fury



Elara lived in the small, windswept village of Oakhaven, nestled against the churning grey sea. Her days were usually filled with the rhythmic creak of fishing boats and cries of gulls. One autumn afternoon, the sky turned a bruised purple, and the air grew heavy with an ominous silence. Old Man Tiber, the wisest fisherman, squinted at the horizon. "A storm's brewing, unlike any we've seen in years," he warned. Oakhaven was protected by an old stone sea wall, a barrier that had stood for generations, but it was aging, and villagers worried about its strength.

By nightfall, the storm had erupted. Rain lashed down in sheets, and the wind howled like a hungry wolf, rattling windows and tearing at roof tiles. The sea, usually a familiar friend, became a monstrous enemy, crashing against the sea wall with terrifying force. Elara, only twelve, huddled with her family, listening to the roar. Her grandfather, a retired lighthouse keeper, had always taught her about the sea's power and the importance of protecting their home. He used to say, "The sea gives, and the sea takes, Elara. But we must always stand firm."

Suddenly, a sickening crack echoed through the village, followed by a collective gasp. A section of the ancient sea wall, near the old lighthouse, had given way. Water began to surge through the breach, threatening to flood the lower houses and the fishing docks where their livelihoods lay. Fear, cold and sharp, pierced Elara's heart. She imagined the water rising, sweeping away everything they held dear. Her hands trembled, and a wave of exhaustion washed over her. "It's too big," she whispered, "We can't stop it."



But then, her grandfather's words echoed in her mind: "Courage isn't the absence of fear, Elara. It's doing what needs to be done even when you're scared." She looked at her neighbors, their faces etched with despair. No one seemed to know what to do. Elara remembered how her grandfather used to reinforce small cracks in their own cottage wall with rocks and mud. An idea, wild and desperate, sparked within her. "We need rocks! Big ones! And sandbags!" she shouted, her voice surprisingly strong against the wind.



At first, people stared. But Elara didn't wait. She grabbed an empty sack and ran towards the beach, where the storm had tossed countless large stones. The wind nearly knocked her off her feet, and the cold spray stung her face, but she pushed on. She began filling the sack, straining with each heavy stone. Old Man Tiber, seeing her determination, was the first to follow. Soon, others joined, forming a chain, passing rocks and bags of sand. They worked tirelessly, their muscles aching, their clothes soaked. Elara directed them, pointing to the weakest spots, her small frame radiating unexpected authority.

Hour after grueling hour, they battled the storm. The water still poured through, but the makeshift barrier slowed its relentless advance. Just as dawn broke, painting the bruised sky with streaks of hesitant orange, the storm began to subside. The sea, though still rough, no longer hammered the wall with the same fury. The breach was not fully repaired, but it was contained enough to prevent catastrophic flooding. Many homes were spared, and the fishing boats, though battered, were still afloat. Exhausted, shivering, but triumphant, the villagers looked at Elara, a quiet hero who had refused to give up.



Elara had shown them that courage wasn't just for legendary figures; it lived in the hearts of ordinary people who chose to act when fear threatened to paralyze them. Her bravery, born of a deep love for her home, had inspired an entire community. They learned that



even the smallest person, with enough determination, can make a monumental difference when faced with overwhelming odds.



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

(1) Who is the main character and where do they live or find themselves?

(2) What problem or challenge did the character face?

(3) Why did Elara decide to act when the sea wall broke?

(4) Was Elara's choice to rally the villagers a good one? Use a detail from the fable to support your answer.



(5) What lesson does this fable teach? How could this lesson help you in real life?

