

Storm at Sea: Reading Comprehension

Far, far away, upon the shore of a strange island there sat an old man and his young, lovely daughter. They were staring out to sea. The man was wearing a blue cloak, embroidered all over with silver. Next to him lay a carved staff and a book as thick and richly bound as a bible. Sometimes his hand rested on the book, and sometimes upon his daughter's arm, as if to comfort her, his face was calm; hers was pale and frightened.

They were watching a ship that was about to be smashed into pieces. A tempest had seized it, the waves rose and crashed, foam spat from the sea. As the ship heaved and tossed, tiny figures, black as fleas, and with patched white faces, clung where they could; and shrieks and screams, could be heard far across the sea. Then it was over. The timbers snarled and cracked, the ship split, and was lost. The tempest subsided, the dark bubble disappeared, and the sea was calm.

"Calm yourself," comforted the father, his arm about his daughter's trembling shoulders: "no more amazement: tell your fragile heart there's no harm done." He spoke the truth. He himself, Prospero the enchanter, had raised the storm and, as he promised his daughter Miranda, not a soul had been lost. He had, by his strange power, brought them all safe to the island.

Adapted from Shakespeare Stories, by Leon Garfield and Michael Foreman

1. Where are the 'old man and his young, lovely daughter'?
2. What are they doing?
3. In the first paragraph **what** three items suggest to us that this man is able to do magic?

4. Why do you think Prospero sometimes has his arm *'rested on the book, and sometimes upon his daughter's arm'*?

5. What were they watching?

6. Which two words in the text tell us the ship was being thrown around by the storm?

7. What happened to the ship? Use evidence from the text to justify your answer

8. *"Calm yourself," comforted the father, his arm about his daughter's trembling shoulders.*
What word tells us Miranda is scared?

9. How many people had died in the storm?

10. Who had created the storm?

11. What had happened to all the people on board the ship?