Name: _____ Date: _____

Washed Up on the Island

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 304 words

The sailor opened his eyes. He was lying on warm, golden sand. The terrible storm was over.

He remembered the enormous waves. His ship had broken apart. A plank had carried him safely here.

The island was green and peaceful. There were figs, grapes and melons. He ate until he was satisfied.

For three days, he was completely alone. He slept in a hollow tree. He lit a fire and hoped for a ship.

On the third day, the ground trembled. The trees swayed. Something enormous was coming.

It was a giant snake, as long as a ship! Its scales shone like gold. Its eyebrows were deep blue.

The sailor was too scared to speak. The snake bent down and lifted him gently. It carried him to its home.

"Why so afraid?" asked the snake. "I will not hurt you. Tell me how you came here."

So the sailor told about the ship and the storm. The snake listened kindly.

"I once had a big family here," said the snake. "Now they are gone. So I know what sad feels like."

"But sad times pass," the snake said. "You came here so that you would live. A ship will find you."

The sailor waited four months. Then one morning, he noticed a ship out at sea.

He climbed a tall tree to see better. He knew every sailor on board! He ran to tell the snake.

"Good luck," said the snake. "Go home and hug your children." It piled gifts on the sand.

There were spices, sweet perfume and many treasures. The sailor carefully loaded them all on the ship.

As the ship left, the island sank into the sea. Nobody would ever find it again.

The sailor gave the gifts to the king. The king thanked him. The kind snake was never forgotten.

Questions

1. Where did the sailor sleep on the island?

A. In a cave
B. In a hollow tree
C. On the ship

2. What did the giant snake do when the sailor was too scared to speak?

A. It hissed at him
B. It slid away
C. It lifted him gently and took him home

3. How long did the sailor wait for the ship?

A. Four months
B. One day
C. Ten years

4. The snake said it knew what sad feels like. Why?

A. It was ill
B. It had lost its family
C. It had no food

5. The tree was "hollow." What does hollow mean?

A. Very tall
B. Painted green
C. Empty inside

Words to know

hollow: empty inside
scales: a snake's hard skin plates
spices: tasty dried plants
treasure: gold and jewels

Answer key: Washed Up on the Island

1. B. In a hollow tree
2. C. It lifted him gently and took him home
3. A. Four months
4. B. It had lost its family
5. C. Empty inside