



Protecting the Village

When Sonia, Siku, and Atoi find a weeping tree in the mountains, they learn that their village is in danger. How will they help save their home from heavy rain?



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Ross Merry da Gloria

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“Siku, we have to go before it gets dark!” Sonia shouted as she and Atoi headed to the mountains. They were going to chop down trees.



As they walked, Atoi heard a voice. He stopped and asked, “Who is crying?” Sonia and Siku listened carefully



“Boo-hoo-hoo. It really hurts,” the voice sobbed.



Sonia looked around. She was stunned to see a bright casuarina tree crying big, sad tears.



Siku and Atoi were scared and did not want to get close to the crying casuarina tree. But Sonia asked boldly, “Grandpa Casuarina, why are you crying and in so much pain?”



“I am heartbroken,” Grandpa Casuarina replied. “The dark rain clouds are mad at me because I always tell them not to send heavy rain. The heavy rain makes all the villages at the bottom of the mountain flood.”



Sonia looked around and saw the emptiness of the mountainside, and she held her head in shame. Siku and Atoi did not fully understand what was going on. “How did you get here?” Sonia asked. “We have never seen you!”



“I have been living here for a thousand years. People do not notice me,” Grandpa Casuarina replied. “Today I must tell you something. In the next six months, heavy rain will come. Look around. These other trees are my children and grandchildren. If people continue to chop them down, then your village at the bottom of the mountain will be flooded. You will lose your homes, your animals, and your wealth.”



Hearing this, Siku, Sonia, and Atoi were so frightened that they ran to the village chief's house.



When they finished telling the village chief what the tree had said, the chief replied, "We must listen to the wise tree."



The village chief ordered the people to stop cutting down the trees. Instead, the villagers planted more and more trees to prevent the village from flooding.



Grandpa Casuarina eventually recovered from heartbreak, and the dark clouds were happy to drop heavy rain on the ground.



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