



The Quest



This is the beginning of a mystery story. Daeng is a fisherman in Thailand. He goes fishing every day. At the moment he is in the harbour. He is getting ready to go out in his boat.

Daeng was worried. He looked up at the sky. It was clear and blue. He looked round him at the calm sea. There was no wind and the monsoon rains had not come yet. The monsoon would come soon. During the monsoon, there would be rain all day, every day, for weeks and weeks.

But today it was perfect weather for fishing. Daeng turned his eyes from the sky and looked at his boat. It was a good fishing boat. He listened to the noise of the engine. Everything was all right. Why was he worried?

Daeng looked at the boy who was sitting quietly in the bottom of the boat. The boy was mending some fishing nets. Lek was a good boy. He helped Daeng a lot. Lek was clever and he learnt fast.

'What is wrong?' Daeng said to himself. He looked at the sky again. 'I have been a fisherman here in Si Racha for many years. But I have never been frightened before. And I don't understand why I am frightened. There is no reason for my fear.'

When he had no money for food, Daeng often went fishing in bad weather. He sailed his boat when the waves in the rough sea were huge. And he had never been frightened. Today the sea was calm, but he was frightened.

'We'll look for fish close to Si Racha today,' Daeng said to the boy. Lek looked up. He was surprised.

'But the weather is good,' said Lek. 'There is no wind. Why don't you go further away from the beach? There are more fish away from land.'

'We'll stay here!' Daeng replied.

The boy said nothing. There was something wrong with Daeng today. Perhaps Daeng was worrying about his money problems. Daeng had bought the boat three months ago. It was very expensive.

Lek stood up and picked up the fishing net slowly.

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