**We Are Not Going To Die…**

**Short Answer Type Questions**

Q1. What preparations did the author and his wife make for their round to the world sea-voyage?

Ans. The narrator and his wife wanted to ‘duplicate’ the round— the world voyage made 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook. They had been making formidable preparations for the last 16 years. First of all they got a boat especially designed and professionally built for this purpose. It was a 23 metre, 30 tonne wooden-hulled boat. They tested it for months in the roughest weather. They were both mentally and physically prepared to undertake their exceptionally long and challenging sea-voyage.

 Q2. When and how did they encounter their first troubles during the long voyage?

 Ans. Everything went on well till they sailed down the west coast of Africa and reached Cape Town. The trouble started on the second day out of Cape Town. They began to encounter strong gales. They blew continuously for the next few weeks. Gales didn’t worry them. But the size of the waves was alarming—up to 15 metres. They rose as high as up to the main mast. They expected the weather to improve on the New Year’s Day. Sadly the weather changed but for the worse.

 Q3. What were the first indications of the ‘impending disaster’ that ultimately struck them on January 2?

Ans. The first indication of the impending disaster came at about 6 p.m. on January 2. An ominous silence prevailed all around. The wind dropped. The sky immediately grew dark. Then came a growing roar. A huge vertical wave, almost twice the height of the other waves, came roaring towards the ship. These were the indications of the coming disaster.

Q4. How did the first ‘disaster’ strike the ship?

 Ans. On New Year’s Day the weather changed for the worse. The waves were gigantic. Strong gales did trouble them. As the ship rose to the top of each wave, they could see endless huge waves. These were rolling towards them. The howling of the wind and the spray was painful to the ears. The sky grew dark. A torrent of green and white water broke over the ship. The captain was thrown overboard.

Q5. What precautions did the narrator take when huge waves struck the boat on January 2?

Ans. Huge waves came rolling towards the boat. The howling of gales and spray was painful to the ears. First of all, they decided to slow down the boat. The storm jib was dropped. Heavy mooring ropes were looped across the stern. They went through their liferaft drill. They attached lifelines. Oilskins and life-jackets were donned. Larry and Herb were continuously pumping out the water like madmen.

Q6. How did the narrator accept his ‘approaching death and why was he still peaceful’?

 Ans. The narrator saw a torrent of green and white water breaking over the ship. His head had smashed into the wheel. He felt himself flying overboard and sinking below the waves. He was losing consciousness. He accepted his approaching death without murmuring. He felt quite peaceful even when death was approaching and Wavewalker was near capsizing.

Q7. How did the narrator hurt himself on January 2?

 Ans. Wavewalker was capsizing. Her masts had fallen. Huge waves struck the boat upright. The narrator grabbed the guard rails. He sailed through the air into Wavewalker’s main boom. Waves tossed him around the deck like a rag doll. His left ribs cracked and his mouth was filled with blood and broken teeth.

Q8. Who were Larry and Herb? What role did they play?

 Ans. Before heading east from Cape Town, the narrator employed two crewmen. They were Larry Vigil and Swiss Herb Seigler. They were to help them ‘to take one of the world’s roughest seas, the Southern Indian Ocean. Larry and Herb did their job quite well. When the gigantic waves struck Wavewalker, they continued pumping water out of the boat.

 Q9. How did Sue hurt herself and how did she bear the injury?

 Ans. The narrator crawled into the children’s cabin to find out if they were safe. Sue told him that her head was hurt a bit. He saw a big bump over her eyes. Sue’s head had swollen alarmingly. She showed a deep cut on her arm. But she didn’t want to worry them when they were trying to save them all.

 Q10. Describe the situation on the morning of January 3.

 Ans. By morning on January 3, the situation showed a little improvement. Pumps had been working round the clock. The water level was sufficiently under control. The crewmen could take two hours’ rest in rotation. But there was still a tremendous leak somewhere below the waterline. No doubt, they had survived for 15 hours since the wave hit Wavewalker. But it would not hold long enough for them to reach Australia.

Q11. Why and when did the captain send ‘May day calls’? What was the response?

 Ans. On January 2 at 6 pm Wavewalker was hit by a gigantic wave. The captain and the crew tried their best to pump water out and steer the ship to safety. When nothing seemed to work well, May-day calls or SOS signals were sent for rescue and help. But they didn’t get any replies. It was not surprising in that remote corner of the world.

Q12. Describe the situation on January 4. Why did the narrator and Mary feel that ‘the end was very near’?

Ans. On January 4, after 36 hours of continuous pumping, they could pump the water out. Mary found some corned beef and biscuits. They ate their first meal in almost two days. But their respite was short-lived. At 4 pm black clouds began building up behind them. The wind was back to 40 knots and the wave rose high. By the morning of January 5, the situation became again desperate. The narrator and Mary sat together holding hands in the evening. Both of them felt that the end was very near.

 Q13. How and when did Wavewalker ride out the storm? How did the narrator feel at that time?

Ans. By the morning of January 6, the wind eased. The narrator was back in the chart room and read on the sextant. They were somewhere in 1, 05,000 kilometres of ocean searching for a 65 kilometre-wide island. At about 2 pm he went on deck. He asked Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees. If they were lucky, they could expect to see the island at about 5 pm. Then with a heavy heart, he went below and dozed off. When he woke up at 6 pm, he knew they must have missed the island.

 Q14. Why did Jonathan ask for a hug and called him the best daddy and the best captain in the world?

Ans. The children were excited. They saw the island before the narrator. Jonathan asked if he could have a hug. The narrator was surprised. His son declared that he was “the best daddy in the whole world and the best captain”. The narrator replied: “Not today”. Suddenly, the children shouted that the island was in front of them and it was as big as a battleship.

 Q15. Describe Ile Amsterdam. How did its inhabitants behave with the newcomers?

Ans. When the narrator rushed on the deck he was relieved to see the outline of lle Amsterdam. It was a French base. It was ‘a black piece of volcanic rock’. It had little vegetation but still it appeared to be ‘the most beautiful island in the world’. They anchored offshore for the night. The next morning all 28 inhabitants of the island cheered them and helped them ashore.

Q16. What did the narrator think of on landing at Ile Amsterdam? Why?

 Ans. On landing at Ile Amsterdam, the narrator’s thoughts were full of Larry and Herbie, his crew members who remained cheerful and optimistic throughout the hardships. He thought of his wife also, who stayed at the wheel for all those crucial hours? He also thought of his daughter, who had been so brave all through the ordeal and had not bothered about her head injury.

 Q17. How can you say that Suzanne’s injuries were serious?

Ans. Suzanne’s injuries were serious because she had to undergo six minor surgeries to remove a recurring blood clot between her skin and skull. She had also injured her arm and had two black eyes.

Q18. Justify the title: “We’re Not Afraid to die …”

 Ans. The lesson is aptly and logically titled: “We’re Not Afraid to Die …” These were the words of Jonathan, the son of the narrator. Like his brave father, Jon declared that they were not afraid to die if they could be all together—Daddy and Mummy and Sue and he. These words sum up the courage shown by the narrator, his wife and children and, of course, the crewmen.

 Q19. “We’re Not Afraid to Die” is a saga of patience and bravery. Comment.

 Ans. “We’re Not Afraid to Die” is the story of rare courage and perseverance of the narrator’s family. It comprised his wife and children, with the crewmen. All the dangers and disasters were confronted with patience, courage and determination. Never did anybody shake or waver even for a second. Even the children showed an exemplary courage. They were not afraid to die. They were ready to die with their daddy and mummy together.

Q20. “Optimism and courage help to tide over difficulties”. How did the narrator succeed in searching the small island?

 Ans. Despite the lost compass and a faulty compass, the author did not lose hope. He used his intelligence to estimate the influence of the westerly currents which flowed through that part of the Ocean. He asked Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees and remained optimistic about spotting the island at about 5 pm.

 Q21. Why do you think people undertake such adventurous expeditions in spite of the risks involved?

Ans. People undertake such adventurous expeditions due to two reasons. They have the passionate thrive for risk, thrill and uncertainty and they push their limits of skill and endurance. They seek such adventures for pure joy and exhilaration. They also want to do certain things for attaining name, fame and recognition.

 **LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS**

 Q1. Describe in brief how the voyage began in July 1976 from Plymouth, England and ended at a small island Isle Amsterdam in the South Indian Ocean.

Ans. The narrator wanted ‘to duplicate’ the round-the-world voyage made 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook. For the past 16 years they had been making preparations. They got a boat professionally built for this purpose. It was a 23 metre, 30 tonne wooden hulled boat. It had been tested for months in the roughest weather. The first leg of their 1, 05,000 kilometre journey passed pleasantly. They sailed down the west coast of Africa to Cape Town.

Their troubles started on the second day out of Cape Town. They encountered strong gales. Waves rose as high as their main mast. The boat was slowed down. The storm jib was dropped. Heavy ropes were looped across the stern. Lifelines were attached, oilskins and life jackets were donned. Wavewalker was near capsizing. Sue got a big bump over her eyes. The narrator was tossed over the deck. His left ribs cracked and teeth were broken. By morning on January 3, Larry and Herb brought the water level sufficiently under control. On January 4, they received some respite. The situation was again quite grim. Jon asked if they were going to die. They were not afraid of dying if they could all die together. But by the morning of 6 January, Wavewalker rode out (of) the storm. lle Amsterdam was just in front of them. The next day all 28 inhabitants cheered and helped them ashore.

 Q2. Describe the steps taken by the captain and the crewmen to protect the boat from the storm and the gigantic waves. Were they successful?

 Ans. Just on the second day when they left Cape Town, Wavewalker began to face all kinds of troubles. Strong gales lashed it for the next few weeks. The size of the waves was really alarming. They went up as high as the main mast. The captain took immediate steps to save the boat. The boat was slowed down. The storm jib was dropped. Heavy mooring ropes were lashed across the stern. Lifelines were attached. Oilskins and lifejackets were donned. A tremendous explosion shook the deck. A torrent of green and white water broke over the ship. Wavewalker was near capsizing. Her masts had fallen flat. Waves tossed him around the deck like a rag doll. Larry and Herb continued pumping water out like madmen. Waterproof covers across the open holes were covered. Most of the water was now being thrown over the sides. All the urgent steps were taken. Fortunately, they proved quite effective. By the morning of January 6, the wind eased. Wavewalker rode out storm. But still it couldn’t hold for long to reach Australia. Hence, the search for islands began. In the end, Wavewalker had a cheerful landing at lle Amsterdam.