

## **9<sup>th</sup> Standard English**

### **Weathering The Storm in Ersama Summary**

Prashant's visit to Ersama and coming of storm

Prashant went to his friend's house in Ersama on 27 October, 1999. It was seven years after his mother's death. In the evening, Heavy and continuous rain filled the darkness. Trees were uprooted. The waters entered his friend's house. The speed of the wind was 350 km. per hour.

Scene of destruction

Everything was destroyed there. The scene of destruction was horrible. Prashant and his friend's family had taken refuge on the roof. Prashant won't forget the horrible scene that he saw. He was greatly shocked to see a huge sheet of water all over. It covered everything as far as the eye could see. Houses were broken. Dead animals and human bodies floated everywhere. Huge trees had fallen. Two coconut trees had fallen on the house of Prashant's friend. Its tender coconuts kept them alive for several days.

Prashant ready to go home

For a couple of days Prashant sat huddled on the roof-top with his friend's family. They were nearly frozen in cold wind. Prashant thought of his family. He decided to go, though his friend's family asked him to stay back. Prashant was worried about his family. So he got a strong stick. He then started on his eighteen-kilometre journey to his village. The flood waters were swollen.

Prashant on way to his village

Prashant waded through water. On the way he found two friends of his uncle. They were also returning home. They had to push away many floating dead bodies of human beings and animals to move ahead. There were hardly any houses left in the villages that they passed. Prashant wept thinking that no one in his family would have survived.

Prashant reaches his village

Finally, Prashant reached his village Kalikuda. The roof was the only thing that was left of his house. So he went to the Red Cross shelter to look for his family there. He saw his maternal grandmother there. It was a miracle for them to see Prashant alive. They had thought Prashant to be dead. Prashant's family was there.

Prashant, now leader of his village

Prashant decided to assess the damage and the danger awaiting the survivors. All the houses in the village had been washed away. Prashant organized a group of youths of his village. It pressurized the merchant to give them some rice. They made a fire and cooked the rice. However, the rice was rotting. His next step was to clean the place of filth, urine and floating dead bodies.

Children devise a method to get food from above

On the fifth day, a military helicopter dropped food. But it didn't return. The group deputed the children to lie there. They had the empty utensils on their stomachs. It was to communicate to the passing helicopters that they were hungry. Finally, they got food through airdropping.

Prashant becomes a saviour and a social worker

Prashant became a saviour. He brought the orphaned children and made a shelter for them. He asked the women to look after them. But he soon found that women and children were sinking deeper and deeper in their grief. He made them join the food-for-work programme. It was started by a Non-Government Organization (NGO). He engaged other volunteers to help keep widows to start their lives. He also believed that orphans should be resettled in their own community.

After six months

Six months passed soon after the super cyclone. Prashant now thought about himself. Earlier he had no time to bother about his own pain. The widows and orphaned children of the village thought of Prashant only in their hours of grief.