

The Castle Telescope



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In a tall castle on a green hill, Princess Elin lived with her mother, Queen Mara. Elin had warm light-brown skin, wavy honey-blonde hair in a loose braid, and bright green eyes full of wonder. She wore a sky-blue velvet dress with gold trim and a small silver telescope charm around her neck. Every morning, she climbed the spiral stairs to the castle's top room, where the great telescope stood.



The telescope was long and brass, and it pointed out of a wide window. Elin loved to look through it. She could see the village market, the river, and the far-off hills. Her fluffy orange cat, Pip, sat on the ledge and swished his tail. He wore a red ribbon collar with a tiny brass bell that jingled softly. 'Look, Pip!' Elin said. 'The world is so big!'



One day, the sky turned grey. Wind rattled the castle windows. Rain poured down in sheets. Elin pressed her eye to the telescope and gasped. Far away, beyond the hills, she saw a village with broken roofs and fallen trees. People were standing in the mud, looking sad. 'Oh no,' she whispered. 'A big storm has hurt that village.' Pip nudged her arm and meowed.



Elin ran down the stairs, her braid bouncing. She found Queen Mara in the great hall. 'Mother, I saw a village through the telescope. The storm broke their roofs and trees. They need help!' Queen Mara listened, her amber eyes calm. 'You have a kind heart, Elin. We must ask the royal council what we can do.'



The council met in a room with a long table. Councilor Bram, an elderly man with bushy white eyebrows and round spectacles, sat at the head. He wore a dark green robe with brass buttons. 'A village far away?' he said, frowning. 'That is a long journey. How do we know they truly need us?' Elin showed him the telescope view, and he leaned in to look.



Councilor Bram adjusted his spectacles. Through the telescope, he saw the broken roofs and the sad faces. He rubbed his chin. 'Well, I suppose we could spare some food and blankets,' he said slowly. Queen Mara smiled. 'Then we shall send a wagon at once.' Pip purred and rubbed against the councilor's walking stick.



The castle servants packed loaves of bread, apples, and warm wool blankets. Elin helped tie the bundles with string. 'Can I go too?' she asked. Queen Mara shook her head. 'The road is muddy and rough. But you can watch from the tower.' Elin nodded and ran back up the stairs with Pip at her heels.



From the tower, Elin watched the wagon roll out of the castle gate. It bumped along the winding road, past the river and over the hills. The storm clouds were drifting away. Pip sat beside her, his yellow eyes following the wagon too. 'I hope they get there soon,' Elin said. 'Those people need our help.'



The wagon reached the village by afternoon. Elin watched through the telescope as the villagers came out of their houses. They cheered and waved. Strong arms unloaded the food and blankets. Children hugged the warm blankets close. A woman looked up toward the castle and waved, as if she knew Elin was watching.



Elin's heart felt warm and full. She saw a boy about her age wrap a blanket around his little sister. An old man shared bread with his neighbor. 'They're helping each other,' Elin said softly. Pip meowed and flicked his tail. Elin realized that her telescope had shown her more than just a faraway place. It had shown her people who needed a friend.



That evening, Elin told her mother everything she had seen. Queen Mara smiled. 'You have learned something important today,' she said. 'Seeing faraway places is not just for fun. It helps us care for people beyond our castle walls.' Elin looked at her silver telescope charm and nodded. 'I want to keep watching,' she said. 'And keep helping.'



The next morning, Elin returned to the telescope. She looked at the village and saw new roofs being built. People were working together. She also saw other places: a fishing boat on the river, a shepherd with his sheep, and children playing in a field. 'There's so much to see,' she said. Pip purred and settled on the ledge beside her.



Councilor Bram knocked on the door. 'Princess Elin,' he said, 'the council wants to thank you. Your telescope showed us how to help. Maybe we should check the far places more often.' Elin smiled. 'We could look every week,' she said. 'And if anyone needs help, we can send supplies.' Councilor Bram nodded. 'A wise plan.'



From that day on, Elin looked through the castle telescope every morning. She kept a small notebook and wrote down what she saw. When she spotted a need, she told the council. They sent food, blankets, or tools. The village rebuilt its roofs and planted new trees. The people sent a thank-you letter with a drawing of the castle and the telescope.



Elin pinned the drawing on her wall. She felt proud and happy. 'Discovery should inspire responsibility,' Queen Mara told her. 'You discovered a village in need, and you took responsibility to help. That is what a good princess does.' Elin hugged her mother. 'I'll keep discovering,' she said. 'And I'll keep caring.'



Now, when the stars come out, Elin often sits by the telescope with Pip on her lap. She looks at the moon and the faraway hills. She knows the world is full of places to discover and people to care for. Her telescope is not just a toy. It is a way to see the world and take good care of it. And she is ready for tomorrow's adventure.