

### Activity 1: Character Sketches

**Task:** Write brief character sketches of the old man, Pelayo, and Elisenda, based on the traits provided in the story and the table on PAGE7.

**Instructions for Students:** Use the physical traits, personality traits, and significance in the story to create a vivid description of each character. Focus on their actions, motivations, and how they contribute to the story's themes of compassion and human nature.

#### Character Sketches

##### The Old Man

The old man with enormous wings is a mysterious and frail figure, embodying vulnerability and otherworldliness. Physically, he is described as old, with a bald skull, few teeth, and enormous, dirty, half-plucked wings resembling those of a buzzard. His pitiful condition, lying face down in the mud and unable to rise due to his cumbersome wings, evokes sympathy. His personality is marked by patience and resilience, as he endures the crowd's mistreatment—being pecked by hens, pelted with stones, and treated as a spectacle—without retaliation. His incomprehensible dialect and sailor-like voice add to his enigmatic nature. In the story, he represents the weak and marginalized, serving as a mirror to society's lack of compassion. His eventual flight symbolizes liberation and the fleeting nature of miracles.

##### Pelayo

Pelayo is a practical and responsible man, grounded in the realities of his modest life. Physically, the story does not provide explicit details about his appearance, but his actions—such as working as a bailiff and handling the old man—suggest a sturdy, working-class individual. His personality reflects pragmatism and caution; he is initially frightened by the old man but soon overcomes his fear, locking him in the chicken coop and later capitalizing on his presence by charging admission. Pelayo represents ordinary people who grapple with the extraordinary, often prioritizing survival over empathy. His significance lies in his transformation from fear to acceptance, and eventually to indifference, highlighting the human tendency to exploit the unusual for personal gain.

##### Elisenda

Elisenda is a loving yet shrewd mother, balancing maternal instincts with a keen sense of opportunity. Like Pelayo, her physical description is minimal, but her actions—caring for her sick child and later managing the crowd—suggest a practical, multitasking woman. Her personality is complex; she shows initial fear and pity for the old man but quickly turns his presence into a profitable venture by charging admission. Her decision to buy luxurious items with the earnings reveals her materialistic streak. In the story, Elisenda represents maternal instincts overshadowed by self-interest. Her final sigh of relief when the old man flies away reflects her mixed feelings of burden and freedom, underscoring the story's theme of fleeting compassion.

## Activity 2: Conversation

**Task:** Write a conversation between the old man and the child after the child recovers from his illness and begins playing in the chicken coop (PAGE4).

**Instructions for Students:** Imagine the old man can speak in a way the child understands. Focus on the themes of kindness and curiosity, showing the child's innocence and the old man's mysterious nature.

### Conversation Between the Old Man and the Child

**Setting:** The chicken coop, where the old man is resting. The child, now healthy, sneaks in to play.

**Child:** (curiously) Mister, why do you have such big wings? Are you a bird?

**Old Man:** (with a gentle, raspy voice) No, little one. I'm no bird. These wings... they're from a place far away, where the sky meets the sea.

**Child:** (wide-eyed) Can you fly like the birds? Up to the clouds?

**Old Man:** (smiling faintly) Once, maybe. Now, they're heavy, tangled in this mud. But the wind still calls me.

**Child:** (sitting closer) Why don't you fly away? My papa says you're an angel, but you don't look happy.

**Old Man:** (sighing) Angels or men, we all carry burdens. I stay because... perhaps there's something here I must see. Like you, with your bright eyes.

**Child:** (giggling) Mama says I'm better now. Did you make me better?

**Old Man:** (softly) The world has its ways, child. Your heart is strong, and that's enough. Keep it kind, always.

**Child:** (nodding) I'll bring you some eggplant mush tomorrow! You like that, don't you?

**Old Man:** (chuckling) It's better than mothballs. Thank you, little friend.

**Child:** (running off) I'll come back, promise!

**Old Man:** (whispering to himself) And I'll be here... until the wind is ready.

## Activity 3: Diary Entry

**Task:** Write a diary entry from Pelayo's perspective, reflecting on the day the old man first appeared and how it changed his life (PAGE8, question 3).

**Instructions for Students:** Capture Pelayo's emotions, from fear to confusion to opportunity, and reflect on how the old man's presence affects his family's life.

### Pelayo's Diary Entry

**Date:** [A few days after the old man's arrival]

Dear -----,

Today feels like a dream I can't wake from. It started with the storm, the rain pounding our little house, and our boy burning with fever. I was hauling crabs from the courtyard when I saw it—him, I mean. A crumpled figure in the mud, groaning, with wings bigger than any bird I've ever seen. I froze, heart racing. Was he a man? A monster? An angel, as the neighbour woman claims? His eyes, so old and foggy, made me shiver, but there was no malice in them.

Elisenda was as scared as I was, but we dragged him to the chicken coop. I stood guard with my old bailiff's club, half-expecting him to vanish or attack. But he just sat there, patient, like he's seen centuries pass. The village has gone mad since—crowds at our doorstep, tossing food, shouting questions. They call him an angel, but treat him like a circus beast. And us? We're charging five cents a head to see him. It's wrong, maybe, but the money's piling up. Elisenda's already dreaming of a new house, and the boy's fever is gone—coincidence or miracle, I don't know.

I can't shake the feeling that he's more than he seems. Yet, I lock him in that filthy coop every night. What does that make me? A protector? A jailer? I don't know anymore. All I know is our lives have changed, and I'm not sure it's for the better.

Pelayo

### Activity 4: Letter to the Editor

**Task:** Expand on the letter to the editor provided on PAGE8, written by a local resident concerned about the old man's treatment.

**Instructions for Students:** Write a formal letter expressing outrage at the community's exploitation of the old man, emphasizing the need for compassion and dignity.

The  
The  
[City Name]

Coastal

Editor  
Chronicle

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my profound dismay at the appalling treatment of the elderly man with enormous wings discovered in our village. This frail, mysterious individual, who some believe to be an angel, has been reduced to a spectacle, confined in a chicken coop, and subjected to ridicule and cruelty. The sight of crowds tossing food scraps and even stones at him, all for a mere five cents' admission, is a disgrace to our community's values.

This man, regardless of his origins, is a living being deserving of respect and kindness. His pitiful condition—weak, voiceless, and entangled in his own wings—should evoke empathy, not exploitation. Instead, Pelayo and Elisenda have turned his suffering into a profitable venture, while the crowd's curiosity lacks any trace of humanity. Our society claims to uphold compassion, yet our actions reveal greed and indifference.

I urge your esteemed publication to highlight this injustice and call for immediate action. The authorities must ensure this man's safety and dignity, providing him with proper shelter and care. Let us restore our community's honor by treating the vulnerable with the respect they deserve.

Sincerely,

[Your

Name]

[Village Resident]

### Activity 5: News Report

**Task:** Write a news report based on the editor's investigation of the old man's situation, as prompted on PAGE8.

**Instructions for Students:** Craft a concise news report detailing the old man's discovery, the community's reaction, and a call for compassion, using a journalistic tone.

### Mysterious Winged Man Sparks Controversy in Coastal Village

By [Reporter's Name], The Coastal Chronicle  
Date: [Current Date]

A peculiar discovery in a local fisherman's courtyard has ignited both fascination and controversy in our coastal village. Pelayo, a resident, found an elderly man with enormous, tattered wings lying in the mud after a storm. Initially mistaken for a shipwrecked sailor, the man was declared an "angel" by a neighbour, drawing crowds eager to witness the spectacle.

Housed in a chicken coop, the man has become a tourist attraction, with Pelayo and his wife, Elisenda, charging five cents for admission. Visitors have flocked from far and wide, some seeking miracles, others hurling insults or stones. "It's heartbreaking," said a local resident. "He's frail, barely eating, yet we treat him like a circus act."

The couple's fortunes have soared, with earnings funding a new mansion. However, the man's condition worsens, his wings sprouting scarecrow-like feathers. A visiting doctor noted the "logical" structure of his wings, raising questions about his true nature. Meanwhile, a competing attraction—a woman transformed into a spider—has begun to overshadow the old man's fame.

Community leaders are now under pressure to address the man's plight. "This is a test of our humanity," said [Local Official's Name]. "We must show compassion, not exploitation." The Coastal Chronicle calls for immediate action to ensure the man's dignity and well-being.

### Activity 6: Speech

**Task:** Write a speech by a community leader addressing the village after the old man flies away, reflecting on the lessons learned about compassion and human nature.

**Instructions for Students:** Use a persuasive tone to urge the community to treat the vulnerable with kindness, drawing on the story's events and themes.

### Speech on Compassion and Humanity

Delivered by [Community Leader's Name]  
Date: [After the Old Man's Departure]

Good evening, dear friends and neighbors,

Today, we stand at a crossroads, reflecting on the strange and humbling events that have unfolded in our village. A very old man with enormous wings appeared among us, a figure of mystery—perhaps an angel, perhaps a wanderer. Yet, instead of offering him kindness, we locked him in a coop, charged coins to gawk, and treated him as less than human. His patience in the face of our cruelty was a mirror to our souls, and what it revealed was not always kind.

His departure, clumsy yet triumphant, as he soared over the horizon, leaves us with a lesson. He was not just a spectacle; he was a reminder of the vulnerable among us—the elderly, the different, the weak—who deserve our compassion, not our exploitation. We profited from his presence, but at what cost to our humanity?

Let us pledge today to change. Let us open our hearts to those who need us most, offering shelter, respect, and care. The old man may be gone, but his legacy remains—a call to be better, to see the divine in the ordinary, and to act with kindness. Together, we can rebuild a community where no one is left in the mud.

Thank you, and let's move forward with compassion.

#### **Activity 7: Caption Writing**

**Task:** Write a caption for a picture of the old man with enormous wings, struggling to fly from the shed (PAGE 5).

**Instructions for Students:** Create a concise, evocative caption that captures the moment's emotion and the story's themes.

A frail angel fights to reclaim the sky, leaving behind a village in need of compassion.

#### **Activity 8: Skit Script**

**Task:** Prepare a short script for a classroom skit based on the conversation between Ms. Sudha and Ritu (PAGE10), highlighting the need for empathy toward the elderly.

**Instructions for Students:** Adapt the dialogue into a skit, emphasizing emotional depth and the caregiver's role in offering comfort.

#### **Skit Script: A Caregiver's Comfort**

##### **Characters:**

- **Ms. Sudha:** An elderly woman in an old age home, feeling abandoned.
- **Ritu:** A compassionate caregiver.

**Setting:** A cozy room in an old age home, with a chair, a small table, and a window.

**Ms. Sudha:** (sitting, staring out the window, sighs) Another day, Ritu. Another day without my family.

**Ritu:** (entering with a tray of tea, smiling warmly) Good morning, Sudha auntie! I brought your favorite tea. How are you feeling today?

**Ms. Sudha:** (turning slowly) Feeling? I feel like a shadow, dear. My children... they said they couldn't care for me anymore. Left me here.

**Ritu:** (sitting beside her, gently) I'm so sorry, auntie. That must be so hard. Want to share a bit more? I'm here to listen.

**Ms. Sudha:** (voice trembling) Listen? Nobody listens! I gave my life for them—my kids. And now, I'm alone, forgotten.

**Ritu:** (placing a hand on hers) Oh, auntie, you're not forgotten. You're loved here. We're your family now—me, the others, we care about you.

**Ms. Sudha:** (skeptical) Care? Or is this just your job?

**Ritu:** (earnestly) It's more than a job, auntie. I love hearing your stories, your wisdom. You're not alone, and you never will be again.

**Ms. Sudha:** (softening, a small smile) You're kind, Ritu. Maybe... maybe I can tell you about my old garden tomorrow.

**Ritu:** (beaming) I'd love that! Let's have tea and plan it.

**Ms. Sudha:** (nodding) Alright, dear. Alright.

**Curtain falls as they sip tea, a moment of connection.**