

# Reading

## Meeting Uncle Tom

Carefully read the text and match the gaps (1-6) with the correct sentence parts (a-h). There are two extra variants you don't need to use.



I'd heard about Uncle Tom for as long as I could remember, (1) \_\_\_\_\_. My parents often mentioned his adventures and he seemed more like a character from a novel than a real person. So when Dad said Uncle Tom was visiting for the weekend, I wasn't sure what to expect.

The house was buzzing with excitement the day he arrived. Mom was cleaning frantically, while Dad reminded her, "He's family, not a guest." (2) \_\_\_\_\_, I rushed to answer it. There he stood—tall, with a rugged look, graying hair, and a sun-worn face. His eyes sparkled with the same warm smile I'd seen on Dad. "Well, if it isn't the niece I've been hearing about!" he said, (3) \_\_\_\_\_.

At dinner, he and Dad joked easily, (4) \_\_\_\_\_. It wasn't just his looks that made him feel familiar. The way he tilted his head when listening (5) \_\_\_\_\_, and the way he paused before speaking was exactly like Dad.

Uncle Tom's stories were endless—about getting lost in Paris after taking a wrong turn near the Eiffel Tower and ending up in a bakery (6) \_\_\_\_\_, but somehow making friends over croissants. Or the time in Italy when he missed his train in Florence and spent the day with a local family who invited him for dinner.

As he hugged me goodbye, he promised, "I'll be back soon, with more stories to tell." Meeting him didn't feel like meeting someone new—it felt like welcoming back a part of the family we hadn't seen in years.

- A** so when my dad asked me a question;
- B** but I didn't meet him until last summer;
- C** was about to leave the house;
- D** reminded me of my elder brother;
- E** when the doorbell rang;
- F** where no one spoke English;
- G** and Mom's laughter filled the room;
- H** pulling me into a warm hug.