

Tiny Town

Marie realised something was wrong when she swung her legs out of bed and didn't feel the floor.

Instead, her foot brushed against something soft. Confused, she leaned forward — and froze.

On her bedside table, where her alarm clock usually sat, stood a *person*. A very small person. No taller than her thumb.

Marie yelped and leapt back, banging her knee on the bedframe.

“Ow!”

The tiny person staggered but didn't fall. He cupped his hands around his mouth and shouted something Marie couldn't hear.

Her heart raced. She scrambled to her feet and looked around her room.

There were more of them.

Tiny people stood on her bookshelf, her desk, even along the windowsill. Some waved frantically. Others stared up at her in amazement. Marie recognised them instantly — her teacher, her neighbour, the woman from the corner shop. Everyone was there.

Everyone except her.

She rushed downstairs, taking the steps two at a time. The kitchen was chaos. Cups had been overturned. Chairs lay on their sides. On the table, her parents stood together, no bigger than toy figures.

“Mum?” Marie whispered.

Her mum waved.

Marie's mind spun. She forced herself to breathe. Panic wouldn't help. If something had caused this, then something could undo it.

She noticed something odd on the kitchen counter: her science homework. On the front page, written in bold letters, were the words:

EXPERIMENT: SCALE AND PROPORTION

Marie's stomach dropped.

She remembered the night before — staying up late, adjusting measurements, muttering, *It probably won't even work*.

Carefully, she picked up the notebook and reread her notes. One line made her wince.

Do not alter ratios.

She had altered them.

Trying not to shake, Marie returned to her room and reset the experiment exactly as it should have been. She checked the numbers twice. Then three times.

When she pressed the final button, the room hummed softly.

The world seemed to wobble.

And then — silence.

Marie blinked.

Her alarm clock beeped. Her parents' voices floated upstairs. Her room looked... normal.

Downstairs, her mum poured cereal, completely unaware that she had once been the size of a chess piece.

Marie exhaled slowly.

At school that day, she didn't mention a word of it. But when the teacher reminded them to follow instructions carefully, Marie nodded very seriously.

Some lessons, she had learned, were not meant to be repeated.

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Comprehension Questions

1. How does the author show that Marie immediately senses something is wrong?

- A) She hears shouting
- B) She does not feel the floor as expected
- C) She sees her parents
- D) She drops her alarm clock

2. Why does Marie initially panic?

- A) She thinks she is dreaming
- B) She cannot recognise anyone
- C) Everyone else has shrunk
- D) Her house is damaged

3. What helps Marie realise she may be responsible for what happened?

- A) Her parents' behaviour
- B) The noise in the kitchen
- C) Her science homework
- D) The teacher's warning

4. Why is the title *Tiny Town* effective?

- A) It describes Marie's bedroom
- B) It reflects how the whole world feels smaller
- C) It refers to a real place
- D) It explains the science experiment

5. What does Marie's reaction show about her character?

- A) She is careless
- B) She avoids responsibility
- C) She thinks calmly under pressure
- D) She relies on others

6. Why does Marie reread her notes carefully?

- A) She enjoys science
- B) She wants to delay fixing the problem
- C) She is afraid of failing
- D) She wants to avoid making another mistake

7. What does the "humming" suggest?

- A) The house is breaking
- B) The experiment is activating
- C) Someone is speaking
- D) Time is stopping

8. Why does Marie keep the incident a secret?

- A) She thinks no one would believe her
- B) She wants to repeat the experiment

- C) She feels embarrassed
- D) She has learned from the experience

9. Which theme is most important in the story?

- A) Curiosity without limits
- B) Power and control
- C) Responsibility for one's actions
- D) Friendship

10. What lesson does Marie learn by the end of the story?

- A) Science is dangerous
- B) Adults should listen more
- C) Instructions exist for a reason
- D) Mistakes cannot be fixed

Answers

1. **B**
2. **C**
3. **C**
4. **B**
5. **C**
6. **D**
7. **B**
8. **D**
9. **C**
10. **C**