



A Timely Prank

By Rohini Chintha

Mittu's mom came home looking worried. "I lost my purse," she said. "It had my bank cards, foreign exchange and my passport. Oh, I am so sorry. I spoilt the plans for the trip."

Dad led mom on to the sofa and asked calmly, "Do you remember the places you visited today?"

Mom thought for a while. "I first went to the bank. Then I visited Aunt Sita and finally I went to the mall. I had the purse with me when I was at Aunt Sita's house. But I don't remember much after that," said mom.

She added, "I know I paid the taxi fare

with the loose cash I had in my hand."

"Call Aunt Sita," said Dad.

"I cannot," answered Mom. "My mobile is in the bag too! It went dead at the mall."

Dad called Aunt Sita from his mobile and she looked around and said the purse was not at her place.

Mom broke down.

"I am so sorry Mittu!" she said hugging him. "We cannot go on the vacation tomorrow. Even an emergency passport takes a few days to be issued. I have ruined the plans for everybody!"

“Mom,” said Mittu, almost in a whisper.

Dad was looking up numbers in an attempt to get mom’s bank cards blocked.

“Mom, please,” said Mittu a little more loudly. “I have something to tell you.”

“Now?” asked mom, a little surprised.

“Yes,” said Mittu

“What?” asked mom.

“Err... I removed Rex’s collar and hid it,” said Mittu sheepishly.

Rex was Mittu’s dog. A GPS chip had been recently fitted into his collar.

“Can you be a little more serious Mittu?” asked dad, dialing the bank.

“Don’t dial the bank, dad. We can trace mom’s purse!” said Mittu.

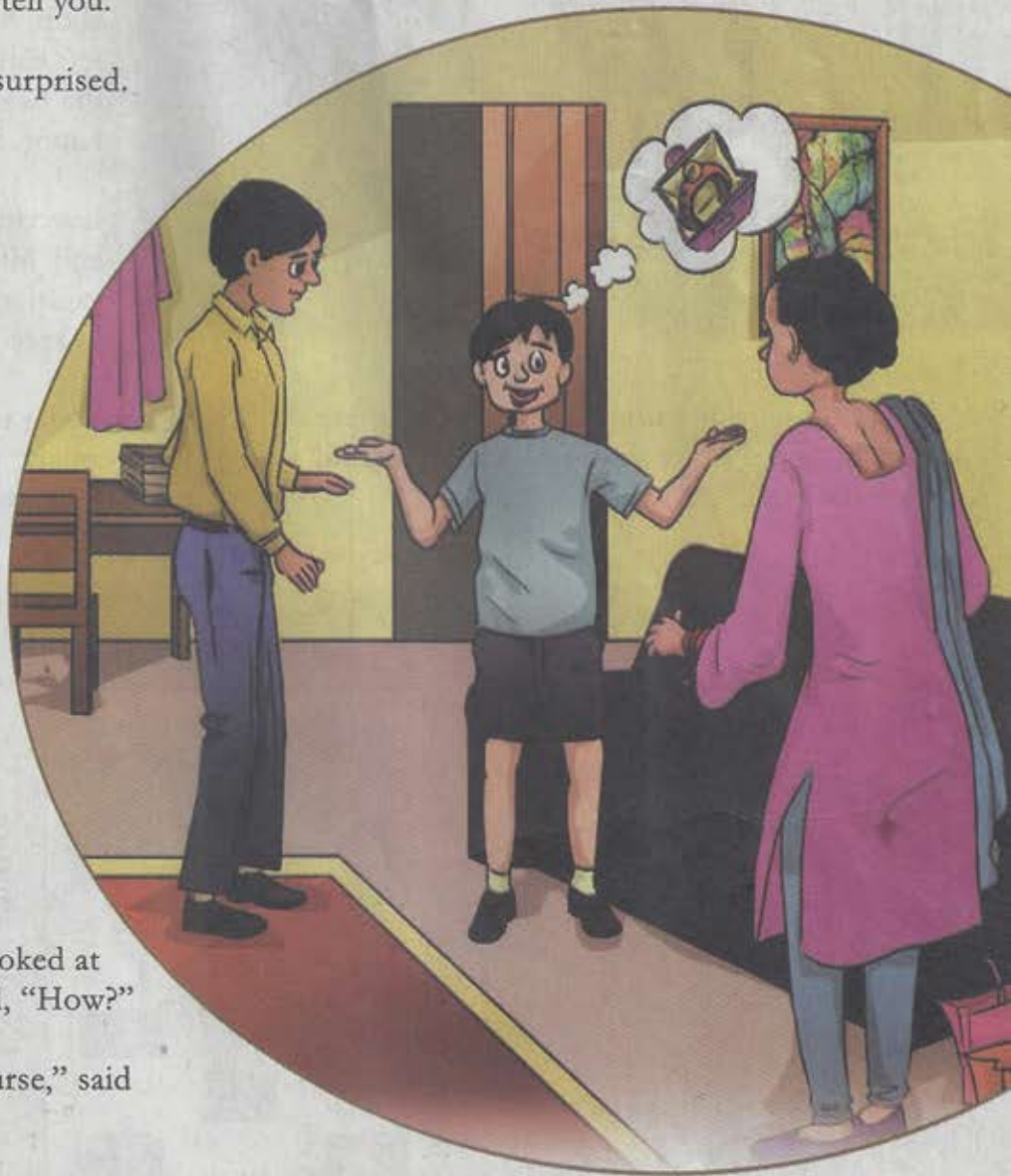
Dad stopped half-way. He looked at Mittu suspiciously, and asked, “How?”

“I hid the collar in Mom’s purse,” said Mittu.

“But, why?” asked mom.

“I did not like the place where we were planning to leave Rex during our vacations. The kennel keeper seemed strange. So, I left Rex at Abhi’s house. I was sure you would track Rex with the

GPS chip to check on him. So, I removed the collar and put it in your purse. I then wanted to play a prank on you, mom. The idea of tracking you instead of Rex seemed funny at that time,” explained a sad Mittu.



He stood silently, waiting for a reaction from his parents, who looked confused.

Mom suddenly let out a laugh. All the stress was gone from her face. “What a timely prank, Mittu!” she said happily.



AMALGAMATION GRAPHICS

“That must be the tailor’s shop. It was the last place I visited before heading home,” said mom recollecting her day.

They quickly headed out to the shop. Mom asked to see the bag she left earlier. Right at the bottom of the bag was her purse. Mom was happy. She gave Mittu a tight hug.

Everything worked out well in the end. Mittu was still going on the vacation. And Abhi’s mother agreed to keep Rex till Mittu returned.

Dad quickly turned on the GPS tracker on his mobile. “It shows a location behind the Mall,” he said.

“Everything turned out fine, thanks to Rex’s collar!” thought Mittu happily, packing for the trip. ●

Answers to puzzles

Page 8: Map Quest



Page 38: Solve It



Page 55: Hidden Picture



Page 39: Solve It
Mango Mania

Ram will pluck 90 mangoes in three hours.

Sunny and Denny’s Sweet Shop

Sunny Elephant and Denny Donkey will get Rs. 3625 each.