

## The Clever Guess

There was a trader named Nazoomi. He had inherited business from his father.

Once, he set out for another city with his camel loaded with goods. It was hot and sand dunes were all around. Suddenly sand storms blew. Nazoomi took shelter in an inn as evening was approaching.

He off-loaded goods and tied the camel outside. He was very tired and fell asleep in no time. In the morning when he woke up, he found that his camel was missing and the load of goods was also not there. He began to weep.

He went to the innkeeper. But he knew nothing about his camel or load of goods. Nazoomi ran around to look for his camel. The roads were deserted. There was no human or camel to be seen for miles.

Hopelessly he walked on. At last, he met a traveller. Nazoomi asked, 'Brother' Have you seen a camel going on this way?'

The traveller said, 'No! I saw no camel, horse or donkey. But I think your camel is one eyed.'

Nazoomi caught the hand of the traveller and pleaded, "That's it. So, you have seen my one-eyed camel?"

The traveller withdrew his hand and spoke, 'I told you that I didn't see your camel.'

Nazoomi walked alongside the traveller in the hope of getting more information on his camel. He was sure that the traveller had seen it that's how he knew the camel was one eyed. After sometime the traveller said, 'Brother! Why are you bothering me? This road goes to the city. Thief must have taken this road. Run ahead. You might catch the thief. I think your camel was loaded with sugar on one side.'

Nazoomi was stunned. The traveller correctly knew what load the camel was carrying. So, he knows about it. Nazoomi asked, "You are right. What was on the other side?"

"My be some grams," the traveller answered.

Now Nazoomi was certain that the traveller had seen his camel. He started arguing with the traveller. The traveller pushed him, "Run! If you waste time, you might lose the camel."

Nazoomi ran on the road not knowing what else to do. He ran on for hours. Then, he saw a resting herd of camels. Some people were resting under the trees. Nazoomi looked for his camel. He found it tied to a tree. And the load of grains and sugar was also there. Nazoomi screamed, "Who brought my camel here?"

No one replied. He wanted to get the thief punished. "Who could steal his camel?' He suspected that traveller.... Either he himself was the thief or the thief's gang member, Nazoomi thought.

Nazoomi untied his camel and travelled back towards the inn to catch the traveller on

the way. Nazoomi met him some distance back.

The traveller asked, "Got your camel?"

Nazoomi was feeling angry. He got down and grabbed the traveller, "You steal camels and then play innocent huh?"

Nazoomi took him to Quazi and complained that the traveller had stolen his camel. He narrated the entire incident to Quazi.

Quazi asked the traveller, "Tell me, are you the thief or his accomplice?"

The traveller calmly said, "Sir! I never saw the camel. How could I steal?"

Quazi said, "If you had never seen the camel how did you know that it was one eyed? And you also knew it was loaded with sugar on one side and grains on the other. How come?"

The traveller explained, "I just used my intelligence. The way I was traveling the leaves and branches of the bushes on the right side of the road were uneaten. Only the left side bushes had been grazed all the way. It was possible only in case of an animal with one eye doing that."

And down on the road on one side sugar had fallen. The ants were at the sugar grains besides flies. Perhaps the sack had a hole the sugar was spilling from. Similarly on the other side birds were feeding on food grains. The food grains don't grow on the road. Therefore, I guessed that some beast of burden had travelled that road carrying loads of sugar and grains."

Quazi and Nazoomi heard in silence. Nazoomi begged pardon of the traveller. Quazi praised the intelligence of the traveller.

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