

The Magic Football



Of course, Hussain would never have found the shop if he had not been cycling under the bridge that evening. Normally he never went under the bridge. It took too long to get home that way and it meant having to go along the busy main road. Hussain hated the main road. The lorries zoomed past at a terrible speed and once he was nearly hit by one.

Today, however, he had no choice. Maya Grudge had followed him out of school on her bicycle. Hussain hated Maya. She was twice as big as him and liked to knock him off his bike whenever she could. Luckily today, Maya's bike hit a stone and she fell off. He had time to escape, so he charged past the take-away and under the railway bridge.

Just after the bridge he stopped and stared in amazement. There was a beautiful new sports shop nestled in between the hardware shop and the bicycle shop. In the window was a football, a shiny, red football with tiny silver arrows all over it. It was the most wonderful thing he had ever seen. Hussain got off his bike and went into the shop. Inside, a little red-faced man dressed in a bright green suit, welcomed him with a huge smile.

'Do you like it?' he asked Hussain.

Hussain nodded. 'It's beautiful. How much is it?'

The little man laughed. 'For the right person it will cost very little. It's a very special football, you see, and I have to make sure it goes to a good owner. Do you think you are that person?' Hussain nodded again, his eyes bright with excitement. 'Then the football is yours.' The little man took it off the shelf and handed it to Hussain.

'Thank you,' gasped Hussain. The little man smiled.

'Just one word of warning before you go. As I said, this is a very special football. Use it well and play fairly and it will help you and your team. But be warned, if it is not used wisely, who knows what it might do.'



Questions

Answer the following questions with a full sentence:

1. What type of transport is Hussain using in the story?
2. Why does Hussain usually not go under the bridge?
3. What type of transport uses the main road under the bridge?
4. Why does Hussain dislike Maya?
5. How does Hussain escape from Maya on this particular day?
6. What are the shops on either side of the new sports shop?
7. When Hussain sees the football what does he do?
8. Who meets him inside the shop?

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