



MITTU'S MISSION

By Rohini Chintla

Mittu's mom went to the backyard looking for him. She was surprised to find him there along with their housekeeper's son, Gopu, giving their dog, Choco, a bath.

Mittu had been helping around the house for over a week now without complaining. Surprisingly, he looked very happy to be helping with the household chores.

"Mittu, can you call the dog trainer and find out if he's alright? He hasn't come for over a week," said Mom.

Mittu who was busy teaching Gopu how to give Choco a bath, pretended not to hear his mother. Grandpa got up to call

the trainer.

"Don't call the trainer, Grandpa," Mittu blurted out. "I asked him not to come. I can take care of Choco. We don't need his help."

"Fine!" said Mom. She turned to Grandpa and said, "Can you call the gardener, Dad? I need him to tend to the rose bed."

"Mom....," interrupted Mittu. "I told the gardener not to come as well. I will tend to the rose bed for you."

Grandpa started chuckling. He found the entire situation amusing. But Mom was definitely not pleased.

“What are you trying to do, Mittu?” asked Mom.

“I need money, Mom. I was hoping to earn some by helping you around the house,” replied Mittu.

“What do you need the money for?” asked Mom.

“To pay the school fees,” said Mittu.

“Did you think we won’t pay your school fees?” Mom asked, surprised.

“It’s not for me. I want to pay Gopu’s school fees. Last week, I heard our housekeeper, Ramu *kaka* telling you that Gopu’s school was asking him to drop out because he could not afford to pay his fees. I will do chores around the house, earn money, and pay his fees so that Gopu can continue going to school. He loves to study. Right, Gopu?” asked Mittu, looking at Gopu.

Gopu nodded happily.

Grandpa was surprised. Mom stared in disbelief. Then the two started smiling at each other.

Mittu was hurt. Not only were his actions ignored, but they were smiling at him.

“What is so funny?” he asked.

“Sorry, Mittu,” said Mom, ruffling his hair affectionately. “We’ve already paid Gopu’s school fees.”

“Why didn’t you tell me?” asked

Mittu, looking offended.

“That’s because you didn’t ask me,” said Mom.

Mittu sulked for a few minutes but when he realised that Gopu would continue going to school, he became happy. He then ran away to play with Gopu.

After a week, the dog trainer and the gardener did not turn up to work one day.

Mom hurried to Mittu and asked, “Mittu, did you ask the trainer and the gardener to stop coming? Are you on one of your ‘good intention’ missions again?”

“No, Mom. I am not on any mission now. They must have taken a holiday on the same day,” said Mittu.

Mom and Mittu had a good laugh. ●

