



MIJBIL THE OTTER



A Trip to Basra:

The story begins with the author and his friend heading to Basra. The author, feeling lonely after losing his pet dog, decides he wants an otter as a new companion. They hope to find one near the Tigris River in Iraq.

Waiting in Basra:

In Basra, only the friend's mail arrives, leaving the narrator waiting for his own. Eventually, the friend leaves, and the author's patience pays off when he receives a message with a surprise—an otter named Mijbil.

Meeting Mijbil:

The narrator shortens the otter's name to Mij, and they start getting to know each other. Mij loves playing with water and learns to open faucets. Despite the fun, it's time to go back to London, and the journey poses some challenges.

Troubles on the Way Home:

Because British airlines do not allow animals, the narrator has to find a different flight for Mij. There is a close call when Mij damages the box, causing a hurried trip to the airport with blood involved.

A Crazy Flight:

During the flight, Mij escapes his box, causing chaos on the plane. The flight attendant helps, and they eventually land safely in London.

London Discoveries:

Back in London, Mij's love for ping-pong balls and marble becomes clear. A walk with Mij surprises and confuses people who mistake him for various animals.

Mij's Impact:

The story ends with the author sharing funny moments of confusion from Londoners who can't figure out what Mij is. Through all the adventures, Mij becomes an unforgettable and unique friend.

Extract Based Questions:

1 I Cabled to England, and when, three days later, nothing had happened, I tried to telephone. The call had to be booked twenty-four hours in advance. On the first day, the line was out of order on the second the exchange was closed for a religious holiday. On the third day, there was another breakdown. My friend left and arranged to meet me in a week. Five days later, my mail arrived.

1. What did the author cable to England?

Ans. The author cabled to England to get information about his mail.

2. What happened after three days?

Ans. The author did not receive any mail after three days.

3. When did the author receive the mail?

Ans. Five days later the author received the mail.

2. Cabled to England, and when, three days later, nothing had happened, I tried to telephone. The call had to be booked twenty-four hours in advance. On the first day, the line was out of order on the second the exchange was closed for a religious holiday. On the third day, there was another breakdown. My friend left and arranged to meet him in a week. Five days later, my mail arrived.

Q/A

1. Write the name of the creature that came out from the sack.

Ans. The creature that came out of the sack was an otter.

2. What was there on its tips?

Ans. There was a small chocolate brown mole.

3. How did the creature/otter look?

Ans. The creature looked like a small mediievally conceived dragon.

Top 10 PYQs:

Short Answer Questions (40-50 words each)

1. How was Mij to be transported to England?

Answer: The British airline to England did not allow animals on board. So, Maxwell booked a flight to Paris on another airline and then to London. The airline required Mij to be packed in a box no more than eighteen inches square. Thus, Mij was transported to England in that box, which was placed on the floor at Maxwell's feet.

2. What, according to the writer, is the real play' of the otter? [CBSE 2015]

Answer: The real play of an otter involves lying on its back and juggling small objects between its paws. Mijbil would roll two or more marbles up and down on his wide, fat belly. He never dropped a single one on the floor. (Minor grammar corrections for clarity.)

3. What happened when Maxwell decided to transport Mijbil to England by air?

Answer: When Maxwell decided to transport Mijbil to England, he placed him in a box. However, Mijbil tore the box apart and injured himself. Later, Mijbil escaped inside the aircraft, terrifying the passengers. Eventually, he settled on Maxwell's knee and did not cause any further disturbance.

4. What happened when the box was opened?

Answer: The air hostess suggested that the author could keep the pet on his knee. As soon as the box was opened, Mijbil sprang out in a flash and disappeared at high speed down the aircraft. Chaos ensued as passengers were startled by the unexpected commotion.

5. In the name of rules and regulations, basic values are ignored but people like the air hostess in 'Mijbil the Otter' are a ray of hope. What virtues do we find in the airhostess?

Answer: The air hostess was somewhat friendly, and she allowed the narrator to place the otter on his lap. She could relate and empathize with the situation faced by the narrator. This shows that apart from being professional, she was a caring lady. She not only wanted to do her job but

was also responsible as she helped the narrator in finding the otter back. She did all that she could do for Maxwell and the otter. She was hard working and was ready to help as she did not say 'no' to help the narrator.

6. The narrator called the airhostess the queen of her kind. This shows how caring and supportive she was. Do you find such people these days? Are people having a change in their values?

Answer: In today's world, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find people who genuinely show care and support. Instead of helping others, many people make excuses and cite rules and regulations. In the past, people were more empathetic and willing to assist others in any way they could. However, values are shifting—people now prioritize their own safety and security first before thinking about others.

7. Why do you think the otter was not friendly at first with the narrator? Can you relate this to the human nature as well? [CBSE 2016]

Answer: The otter was initially cautious and distant because he was unfamiliar with his surroundings and the narrator. However, as he gradually became comfortable, he warmed up and formed a bond with the narrator. This behavior is similar to human nature—people also take time to trust others and only become friendly once they feel comfortable. Until then, they tend to maintain a certain distance.

8. Why does he go to Basra? How long does he wait there, and why?

Answer: He goes to Basra to the Consulate General to collect and respond to his mail from Europe. However, his mail did not arrive on time. He cabled to England, but after three days with no response, he attempted to make a telephone call. The call had to be booked 24 hours in advance.

On the first day, the telephone line was out of order.

On the second day, the exchange was closed due to a religious holiday.

On the third day, there was another breakdown.

This series of delays forced him to wait longer than expected.

9. What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? What did it do two days after that?

Answer: When Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom, the otter went wild with joy in the water. He plunged and rolled around, shot up and down the length of the bathtub underwater, and created a splashing mess big enough for a hippo.

Two days later, Mijbil escaped from the bedroom and made his way into the bathroom. He struggled with the chromium tap until he managed to turn it on to a full flow.

10. Why does Maxwell say the airhostess was "the very queen of her kind"?

Answer: The author shared with the air hostess what had happened earlier at home and took her into his confidence. She was a considerate and understanding lady. She cooperated with the author and suggested that he keep his pet on his knee. Her kindness and willingness to help made the author describe her as "the very queen of her kind."