



## The Sailor's Secret

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It was a bright morning in Pondicherry, and the museum bustled with excitement. The grand opening of the 'Hidden Treasures of the French Era' was underway. The centerpiece, a 200-year-old painting called 'The Sailor's Promise,' hung proudly in its display case.





At precisely 10:30 a.m., gasps filled the room as the crowd realized the painting was gone. The display case was empty, the glass untouched, and no alarm had sounded. Inspector Dev Menon, a man known for his sharp mind, was called to the scene.





Young Ravi Kumar, Inspector Menon's assistant, carefully examined the scene. He found a red-dust footprint near the back door, an old ticket stub under the empty frame, and a faint smell of turpentine lingering in the air. The clues were subtle, but they told a story.





Back at the station, Ravi studied the museum brochure, comparing it to a photograph of the missing painting. He noticed the original painting had a lighthouse in the background, a detail missing from the stolen artwork. The difference sparked a new lead.





The next morning, Ravi received a cryptic phone call. A woman's voice instructed him to meet her at the old lighthouse at six o'clock if he wanted to see 'The Sailor's Promise' again. The mystery deepened, and Ravi knew he had to act fast.





As the sun dipped below the horizon, Ravi waited near the lighthouse. A woman emerged, holding a rolled canvas. She unrolled it, revealing faint blue lines beneath the paint. "A map," she whispered, "The French left something behind..." Footsteps echoed behind him.