

Lost Money

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Idalia was smiling ear to ear. She'd picked out the perfect doll to add to her collection, and it came with the cutest accessories ever! They were going to be fun to play with, and her best friend Susan was sure to be jealous.

She got in line for the cashier behind a young boy who was buying a robot. She smiled, because he reminded her of her younger brother. She waited her turn, and then took her purchase up to the register. She smiled and handed it over.

The lady scanned it and read off the price. So far, everything was going like it should. Then Idalia reached for her money. She always kept it in her back pocket, but when she reached for it, there was nothing there. A cold sweat broke across her forehead, and a sick feeling hit her like a punch in the guts.

She frowned and patted down her pocket and searched her other pockets while the woman looked at her expectantly. She felt a blush filling her cheeks as she stood there without any money. "I'm sorry, but I seem to have lost my money." She smiled weakly and helplessly and looked around on the floor around her.

"No money, no doll." The cashier said unsympathetically, smacking her gum as she spoke.

"I know... I just..." Idalia stammered.

"Go look back through the store. Retrace your steps to see if you can find it." A helpful granny who was next in line suggested.

"I'll hold the item while you look." The cashier remarked, punching some buttons to put the transaction on hold. She didn't sound very hopeful.

Idalia fled the scene, rushing past the granny to run around the store. She tried to visualize where she'd walked before. It was so hard to remember. Had she walked past the stuffed animals? Had she paused to look at the magazines? Which way had she gone?

She wandered from aisle to aisle, looking with rapidly fading hope. She felt like crying; she felt like throwing up. She felt like grabbing her doll and running from the store, but that would be stealing.

Just then, she noticed a boy stooping down in front of the dolls to pick something off the floor. Her eyes went wide. She had bent down to inspect the items on the bottom shelf, and her money must have fallen out!

"That's mine!" She shouted, racing over.

The boy was so startled that he jumped back and she snatched it up. "Hey!" He shouted.

"I'm sorry, but I dropped this when I was shopping." He looked like he might argue with her, so she flipped through the bills and handed him a dollar. "Thanks for helping me find it." She said with a smile.

He couldn't really argue with free money, so he closed his mouth, took the dollar, and nodded. She strode off then to claim her doll, stopping only to choose a small coin purse to buy to keep her money in for the future. She'd learned her lesson, nearly the hard way, but the scare had been enough.



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What is Idalia trying to buy?
 - A. a doll
 - B. a book
 - C. shoes
 - D. makeup
2. How is Idalia's mood as she goes up to the counter?
 - A. She is a bit sad about spending her money.
 - B. She is feeling okay, but nothing special.
 - C. She is happy and excited about her purchase.
 - D. She is angry for waiting so long and impatient.
3. Why does Idalia smile when she sees the boy in front of her in line?
 - A. He reminds her of her brother.
 - B. He is cute.
 - C. He is buying something funny.
 - D. He is dressed funny.
4. How does Idalia respond to the boy who found her money?
 - A. She accuses him of theft.
 - B. She fights him and takes her money back.
 - C. She begs and pleads for her money back.
 - D. She takes the money and pays him a dollar before he can argue.
5. How do you know Idalia has learned her lesson?
 - A. She uses credit cards afterward.
 - B. She buys a coin purse to hold her money.
 - C. She cries a lot when her money is lost.
 - D. She didn't learn her lesson.

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