



Hi there, I'm Matt.

I'm really lucky, as I get to travel a lot with my family. We go to some pretty exciting places, so I'm always taking photos with my digital camera.

## *Matt's Volcano Story*

Matt looked very tired and dishevelled as he emerged from the taxi outside his house. Stan bounded up to the front gate and sat, wagging his tail excitedly.

Matt crouched down and patted him affectionately. "Hey, Stan! It's great to be home again. What a holiday that turned out to be!"

"What do you mean, Matt?" asked Stan. "Where's your luggage?"

"I've got my camera here," replied Matt, holding up the digital camera hanging round his neck, "but that's about all. Come on in, I'll show you my photos and tell you what happened."

Once they were inside, Matt sat on the couch and Stan jumped up beside him. Matt turned on his camera to show him the first picture on the viewing screen.

"That's my uncle's house where I went to stay," said Matt.

"Nice," Stan commented approvingly, "and look at that cool mountain in the background – that's pretty spectacular."

"Yes, and it became a lot more spectacular later, I can tell you," replied Matt.

"How come?" asked Stan.



"Well, when I got to my uncle's place, he told me how they had been having quite a few small earthquakes recently. We even felt a few more earthquakes the next day."

"I hope you remembered to drop, cover and hold," said Stan.

Matt nodded. "Yes, though fortunately the quakes weren't too bad. But we still listened to the radio to find out what was happening."

"That was wise," said Stan. "It's always a good idea to listen to the radio in emergencies."

"You're right. The radio announcer told us that there was a possibility of a volcanic eruption, so we had to do some things to be prepared."

"Volcanoes can pollute water, so saving as much as you can beforehand is a good precaution," said Stan.

"We had to stay indoors with all the doors and windows shut tightly," said Matt. "And if you had been with us, even you would have had to stay inside."

"I know," replied Stan. "Animals and pets should be kept indoors or under shelter in an eruption. So what happened next?"

"My uncle already had his emergency items, so we gathered up what we needed in case we had to get away in a hurry."

"Ah, a getaway kit," nodded Stan. "Besides all the emergency items, what else should be in a getaway kit?"



"We packed our passports in with the emergency supplies," replied Matt, "and my uncle also had his insurance policies and some of his special photo albums."

"Good idea," said Stan. "I'd hate to be without some of those things – though I don't have a passport."

"No, I guess dogs don't," smiled Matt. "Anyway, the earthquakes got worse, and clouds of steam and ash started belching out of the volcano."

"Ah, so that's what you meant about that mountain becoming more spectacular," said Stan. "What happened then?"

"The radio told us we needed to evacuate, so we grabbed our getaway kit and left the house. It was almost like winter outside because the ash was falling like snow."

"Did you drive away from the house in your uncle's car?"

"No, cars stir up the ash, which can clog engines and make them stall. Plus you don't want a huge traffic jam. So we walked to the gathering point that civil defence asked us to go to."

"So that's why you didn't bring your luggage – you had to walk." Stan peered closer at one of the photos on the camera. "Hey, you guys look like masked robbers."

"We had to tie damp cloths around our faces to keep from breathing in the ash," answered Matt.





“And I see you are wearing long sleeves in the photo, instead of your normal T-shirt.”

“I had to protect my skin,” said Matt. “Ash is very hot and can irritate your skin.”

“It’s a shame you haven’t got many photos here of the eruption itself,” commented Stan, looking at the camera.

“No, we didn’t hang round. The blast from a volcano can travel far and fast, so you don’t want to be hanging round taking photos or anything.”

“I bet it was scary,” said Stan.

“It sure was – I don’t think I’ve ever been as scared in my life,” answered Matt.

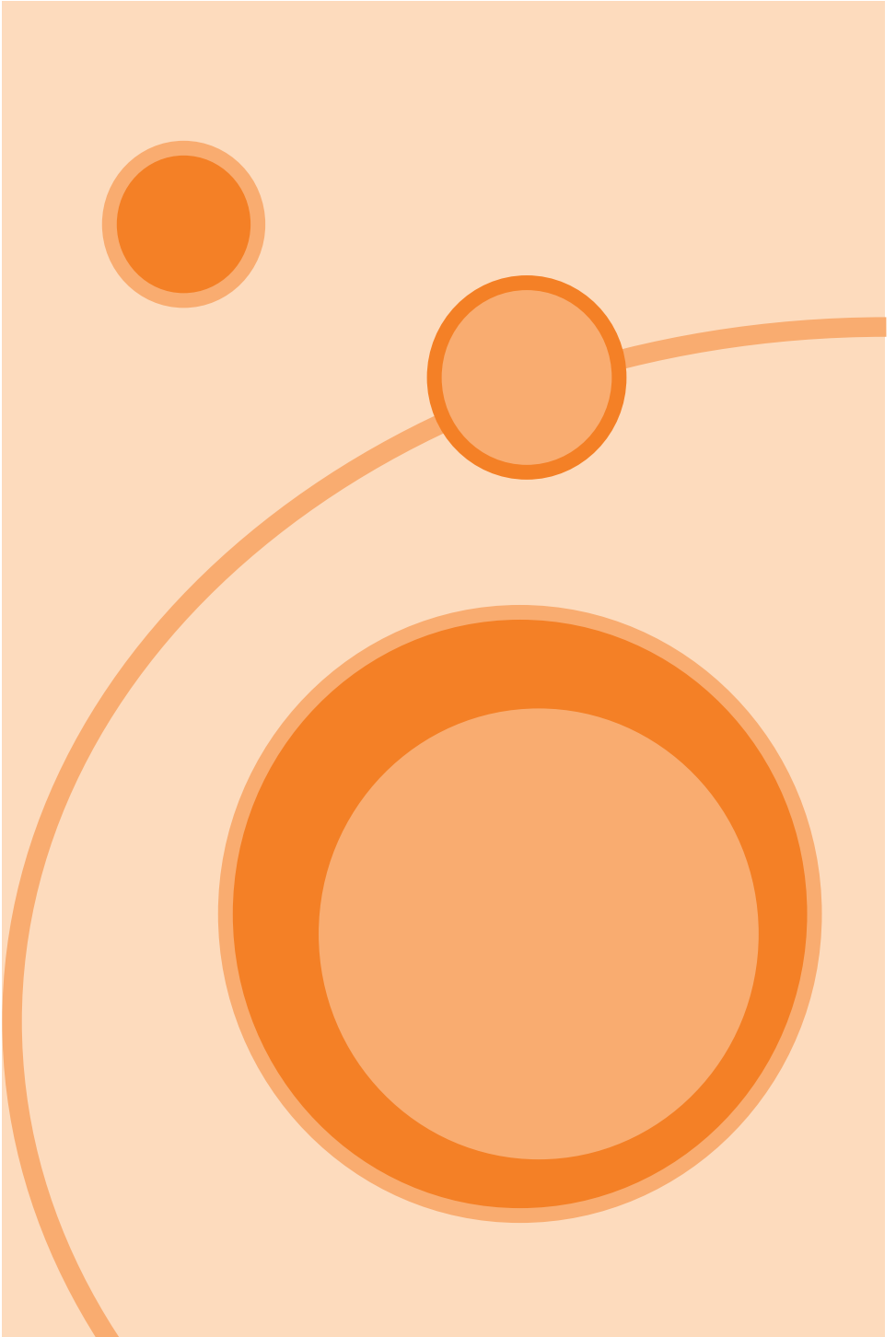
“But we didn’t panic because that would only make things worse. Anyway, we got away safely, thank goodness.”

“No wonder you’re so relieved to be back here again, even without your luggage.”

“Yes, after looking forward so much to that holiday, I must say that I love being back home.”

Stan looked at Matt with a doggy-smile on his face. “Well, I ‘lava’ having you at home again too.”





# What to do in a volcanic eruption



## Before

- Know where active volcanoes are and whether they are likely to affect you.
- Talk with your family about an emergency plan and what you will need at home.
- Talk to your family about an evacuation plan – where to go and how to get there.

## During

- Listen to the radio for instructions.
- Stay indoors – keep windows and doors shut. Bring your pets indoors if you can.
- Save water in your bath and other containers at an early stage, as the water supply may become polluted.
- If outdoors – find shelter.
- If told to leave, cover your face and mouth, wear a dust mask and goggles if you can, and take your essential emergency survival items.
- Do not go sightseeing.
- Take your outer layer of clothing off before entering a building – volcanic ash is difficult to get rid of.

## After

- If in a safe place – stay put.
- Listen to the radio for information.
- Return home only when told.