

Shirin

Salami and
Chocolate Surprise



Grumble

Sometimes at home the water cuts off. When that happens, we hear some strange sounds coming out of the pipes in the walls. One time those strange sounds were coming from my stomach.

Grumble grumble grumble...

Besides grumbling, my stomach hurt too. I was suffering doubly. I kept my arms on my stomach.

“Ohhhh!”

“Shirin, are you okay?”

“Mom, I have a stomachache.”

“What did you eat?”



I tried to ignore my mom's question. I was pretty sure she hadn't realized what I had eaten yet. When she left to get me some warm socks, I prayed that she wouldn't go into the kitchen. If she went into the kitchen, she could easily understand why I had a stomachache. Luckily though, she came back with her same concerned face and a pair of thick socks. I knew she hadn't gone into the kitchen because if she had she'd be angry, not concerned.



My mom thinks cold causes everything. She thinks I have a headache because I don't wear my hat, that I have a flu because I don't wear my sweater, that I have a stomachache because I walk around without socks on. Unfortunately there is no relationship between my stomachache and my bare feet. The culprit isn't the cold. It isn't me either. The guilty one is completely my sweet tooth. I repeated this little speech a few times in my head so that I could have it ready when my mom inevitably went to the kitchen and everything was revealed. I had to be ready to defend myself.



After my mom gave me the socks and a blanket and told me to lie down on the sofa, she left again. I wanted to go to sleep but the grumbling in my stomach just wouldn't stop.

Ah!

Why didn't they warn me? I heard that, then I heard my mom coming back into the room with heavy steps. I knew it was all over. The evidence had been found. The time for me to defend myself was coming, and fortunately I had prepared for it.



“Shirin! Did you drink the giant bottle of soda that was in the fridge?”


“It wasn’t giant.”

“It’s no wonder you have a stomachache. Someone who is hungry and drinks that much soda instead on an empty stomach will definitely get a stomachache.”

“It was just big. Not giant. And I wasn’t hungry...”

“We haven’t had dinner yet. How could you be full?”

“I ate two slices of bread with chocolate and salami. Then I was thirsty, so I drank the soda.”! /



What?!
Bread with
chocolate and
salami?

“I couldn’t decide between salami or chocolate, so I put the chocolate on the bread then the salami on the chocolate. Delicious.”

“Then you drank a giant bottle of soda.”

“A big bottle. Besides, you’re the one who bought the soda. Isn’t soda for drinking?”

“I got it so we would have it when guests come over. I didn’t buy it for you.” About an hour ago, my mom came home from shopping. She had gotten chocolate cream, bread and salami, because there was a sale at the store. They gave her the soda for free as a promotion. She never would have bought soda on her own. I thought sales were a good thing, but now look what’s happened!



Naturally, after my mom had put all that good food in the fridge, I went to eat it. When my mom opened the packages and put the food on the plates, she said that I could taste them. So, I tasted them. But I couldn't quite understand the taste, so I had to taste them again. And again. And again...

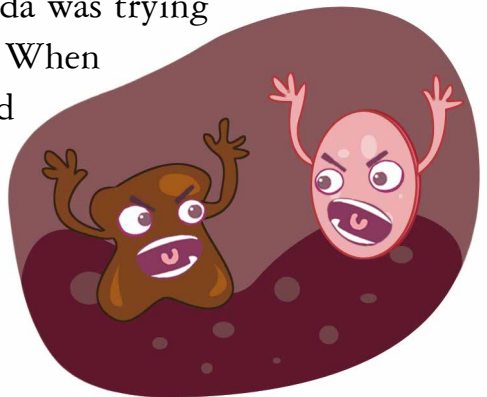
About an hour later, the plate was empty but my stomach felt like it was about to explode. And since I had just eaten a container of chocolate cream and a bunch of spicy salami, I was thirsty.





*I ran back to the fridge,
where I found the bottle of soda.*

Of course, I drank it right away, but when the lamb-like soda met with the lion-hearted salami and chocolate in my stomach, things got ugly. It felt like there was a brawl in my stomach. The salami was chasing the chocolate and the soda was trying to break it up. When I thought it had stopped, they would start up again.

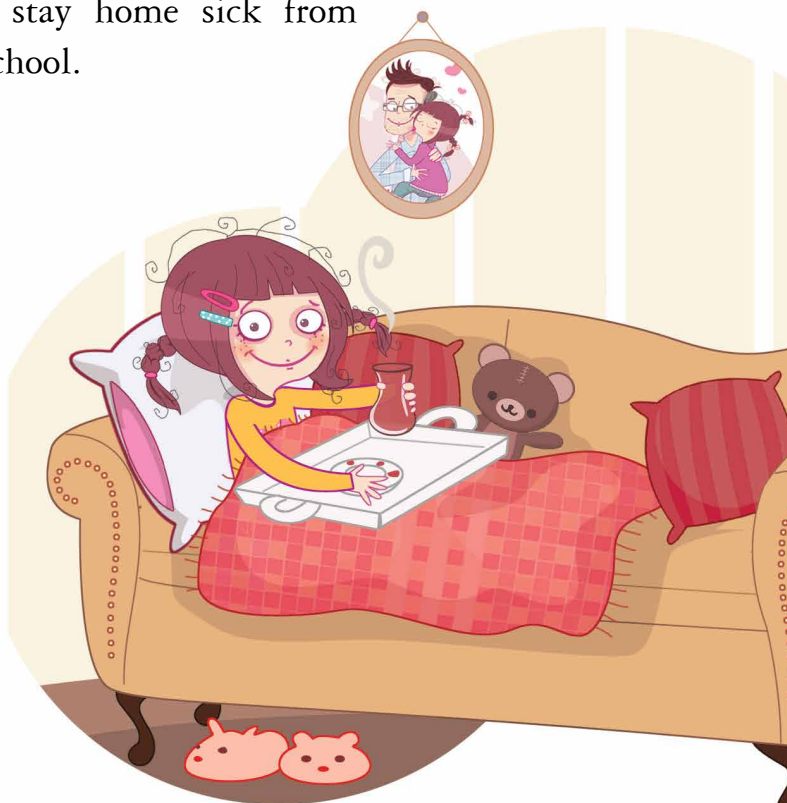


All the same, if I had the chance, I would eat all of them again. It was worth it.

My dad came home. My mom made herbal tea for me.

“Here Shirin, drink this. You’ll feel better.”

I sat on our biggest, comfiest sofa and began to drink my tea. My favorite show was on TV. It reminded me of days when I stay home sick from school.



While I was thinking about that, the phone rang. Some of my parents' friends wanted to come over that night. My mom said that I wasn't feeling well and apologized to them.

"But mom, I'm fine. Why don't you have them come over?"

My mom put her hand on my forehead.

You haven't got anything right now but it could come later. We have to be careful.



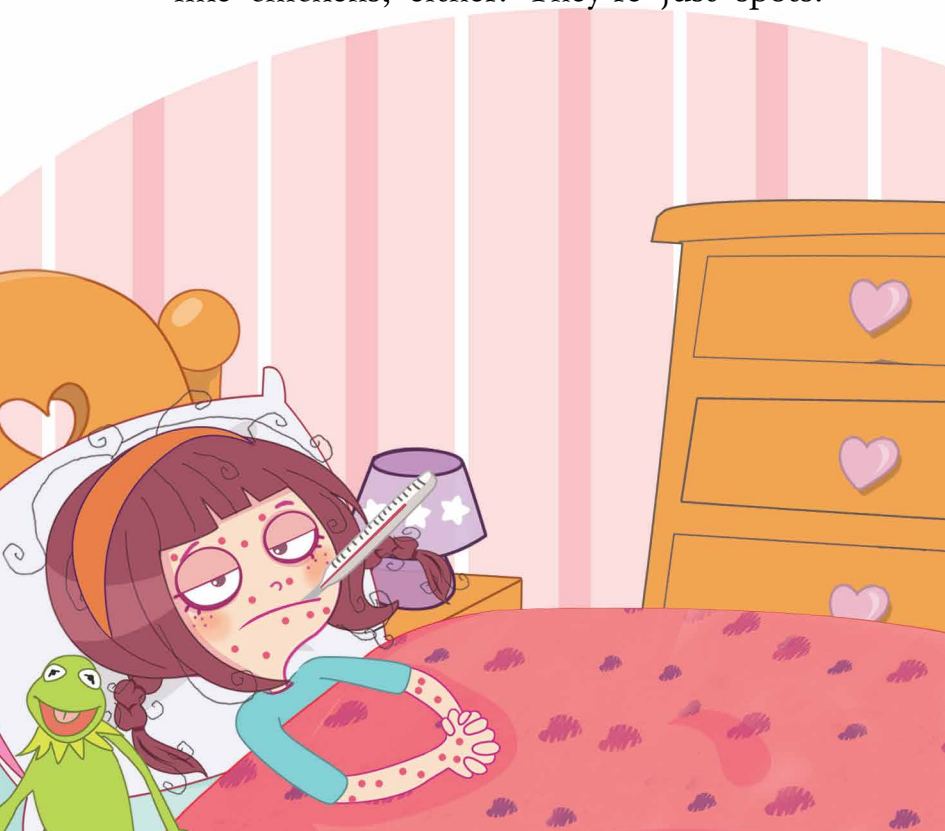
Sure, there is something wrong with my stomach, but that doesn't mean I'm sick. My body just has a lot to say. It's not a sickness.

Grumble grumble grumble...

Or maybe it's a Grumble Sickness.



One day I was really sick, and this wasn't a funny sickness like grumble sickness. I had spots all over my body. Even on my face. They itched like crazy, too. I could barely keep myself from scratching them. The doctor called it Chicken Pox. I had never heard of a crazy name like chicken pox. Chicken is a good thing. It's delicious. And it doesn't itch. And the spots don't look like chickens, either. They're just spots.



Maybe they should call it “itchy spots” instead of “chicken pox”. But the shapes of the spots are so weird that they don’t even look like spots. You could call them splobs. They look more like splobs than spots. “Splobs” doesn’t mean anything, and since the spots don’t look like anything, we can give them a meaningless name. So “chicken pox” can be “itchy splobs” instead. I like making up words like this. They contribute to the richness of our language.



Last year I took the job of finding names for things very seriously, because our teacher said that our language was under a borrowed word attack. We even have an institution to stand against this attack. It worked to find a new English word in exchange for the words that we had borrowed

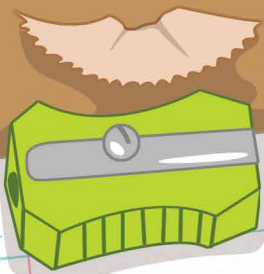
from other languages. I thought I could help them. I worked like a busy bee and found a lot of good words. I wanted my teacher to see what I had produced in just one week and to send them to that institution.

But what
happened?

When my teacher saw

my list, her eyes bugged out of her head.





Apricot: weirdfruit

Lemon: sourfruit

Tangerine: yummyfruit

Orange: otheryummyfruit

Coffee: hotgross

Spinach: greengross (Candy: eatitall)

Tuna: sandwichfish!

Jar: holdstuff

Cash: buystuff

Mummy: shouldbedead

Guitar: soundsgood

Algebra: lotsanumbers

Traffic: lotsacars

Mahogany: mahogawhat

Sofa: sitonit

Garbage: throwitout

Syrup: goodonwaffles

