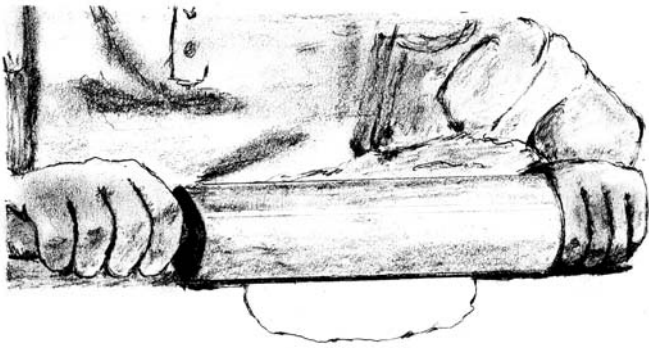


Chapter 19

The Afternoon Proposal



The boys carefully rolled out the biscuits, which looked like white, doughy pancakes, and then placed them on the baking sheets.

Mollie set to work on her second, and she hoped final, batch of gingersnaps. Mom prepared lunch so she could be available in the kitchen to help if Mollie needed it. As Mollie dumped in the baking soda, she giggled. “See, Mom, I’m not forgetting the baking soda this time!”

When Mollie was finished, she placed the dough on a shelf in the refrigerator to chill and set a timer for one hour. Taking off her apron, she asked Mom, “Do you want me to call everyone for lunch?”

“Yes, please do.”

After eating sandwiches and fruit, the children cleaned up the lunch mess. Max went to the hallway closet and found a board game they could play. A while later, Mollie’s timer went off. Max and Mitch volunteered to help, and Mollie accepted gratefully. Maddie pulled up a chair to watch them.

The three began rolling the sticky dough around in the white sugar. They efficiently worked together and in no time had both cookie sheets filled with gingersnap balls. Max put them into the oven while Mollie set the timer. The boys decided to work on a project in the basement, but Mollie went into the living room to lie on the couch for a bit.

“Whew, am I tired. I didn’t know baking could wear out a person like this,” Mollie exclaimed.

Looking over at Mom, Mollie noticed her rubbing her forehead. “I’m not feeling all that great myself; I’ve developed a headache since lunch. I think I’d like to nap this afternoon, but I’ll wait until the cookies are done baking so I can take them out of the oven.”

An hour later, the last batch was cooling on the counter, and the pungent smell of ginger filled the house. Mom went upstairs to put Maddie in bed for a nap and to take one herself. That left Max, Mitch, and Mollie to decide what they were going to do. Mitch counted the cookies. “Seventy. Didn’t they order four dozen? That means, well, twelve times four. Oh. What is that?”

Max quickly calculated, “Forty-eight.”

“Oh, yes,” Mitch laughed, “forty-eight. I should have remembered. I happen to say that twice every day with my math flashcards! Anyway, seventy take away forty-eight means there are twenty-two cookies extra. There are plenty for us to sample. Why don’t we have a cookie snack, Mollie?”

“Yum, that sounds good. I’ll pour the milk.” Soon the three were happily munching on their cookies.

Mitch said, “I was hoping to play with Honey this afternoon, but we’re not supposed to leave the house when Mom is sleeping.”

Max sighed. “I wanted to go, too. It would have been fun to play in the sprinkler with Honey since it’s so hot out again. What in the world are we going to do? We are totally stuck in the house.”

Mollie suggested, “We could work on our memory verses. I think we’re pretty close to being able to do them word perfect.”

The boys agreed, and the three were soon in the living room with their Bibles. After diligently working on their verses for about thirty minutes, Max announced, “Okay, what next?”

Mollie glanced at the clock. It read three-thirty. “I have an idea. Why don’t we make supper? Mom planned on having pizza, but I think she forgot to make the dough before her nap. Let’s look through the refrigerator and pantry to see if we can find something we could put together for supper.”

Max and Mitch thought it was a great idea. Mitch jumped up, opened the pantry door, and began calling out items, “Taco shells, tomato sauce, pizza sauce, noodles, beans, chocolate chips, tuna fish, croutons.”

Max had his head in the refrigerator door, “Leftover meat from last night, spaghetti sauce, pepperoni, cooked sausage, fruit, lettuce, carrots, bean dip, that’s about all. Oh, and some biscuits. I can tell we need to go grocery shopping; it’s slim pickins’ in here!”

Max glanced at Mollie, who looked thoughtful. “What are you thinking, Mollie? I can tell the biscuits gave you an idea.”

“Yes, and I think it’ll be a good one,” she said. “Why don’t we make biscuit pizzas? We have sauce in the pantry, pepperoni in the refrigerator, and the cheese should be there, too. If we do them ourselves, Mom won’t have to make supper.”

“Yes,” Mitch enthusiastically agreed, “that sounds great!”

Max offered to call Dad to make sure it was okay. He came back a minute later and reported that Dad thought it a great idea, but that they could wait on baking them until he came home. Dad was hoping to be home in about an hour.

“I’ll grab the sauce,” Mitch volunteered. “Will two cans do it, Mollie?”

“Sure.”

Max searched for the mozzarella cheese but couldn’t find it. “Mollie, where’s the cheese?”

“Oh, I think it must be in the freezer. It should be in plastic bags. Mom buys a huge bag of the cheese, and then she puts it into smaller bags to freeze. I think it’s labeled.”

Opening the freezer, Max quickly sorted through a bin of plastic bags filled with frozen food and found the cheese. He set it on the counter to defrost.

Max looked at Mollie. “You know, I wanted to tell you and Mitch something. I’m sorry for my wrong attitude about staying home this afternoon. Please forgive me.”

Mitch chimed in, “Yes, me too.”

Mollie smiled. “I’ll forgive you. I must admit I wasn’t too happy about staying inside either!”

Now that their consciences were clear, Max and Mitch could thoroughly enjoy their work. They had fun popping the cans of biscuits open. It was a real treat to use store-bought biscuits. Mollie put flour on the counter so the dough wouldn’t stick to it and then pulled the rolling pin from the drawer. The boys carefully rolled out the biscuits, which looked like white, doughy pancakes, and then placed them on the baking sheets.

In the middle of this, Maddie came downstairs looking sleepy. Mollie pulled up a chair so Maddie could sit and watch. Mollie poured apple juice in a small cup with a lid and put some pretzels on a napkin. Maddie was soon eating happily.

The children set up an assembly line to make the pizzas. Max spread the red sauce evenly on each biscuit, Mollie generously sprinkled on the cheese, and Mitch placed a thick layer of pepperoni on top. It appeared, though, that an equal amount of pepperoni was disappearing into Mitch’s mouth.

“Mmmmm . . . These pizzas are going to be the best,” Mitch said, savoring his most recent nibble.

Max frowned unhappily. “Mitch, you are eating all the pepperoni. We’re not going to have enough left for the pizzas.”

Mitch’s face drooped. “I’m sorry, Max. I won’t eat any more.”

Max quickly said, “Please forgive me for being angry with you.”