



Twist

Rumbling Stomach

Lunchtime was near. As Jimmy Prune sat at his desk, his stomach cramped. He placed a hand on his lap.

“Rats! Not again!” he groaned.

From under his desk came noises.

RRRRR! SQUEAK! SPUT! FFT! FFT! POP! RRRRR!

Jimmy Prune blushed to his toes. He knew what would happen next.

First, the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces giggled. Then Loud Larry laughed his big booming laugh. The rest of the class followed with snickers.

Mrs. Friendly sat behind her desk, grading papers. She turned to check the clock above the blackboard. “Lunchtime, class,” she said. “Please line up.”

Jimmy Prune trudged to the end of the line that formed at the door. “Why-oh-why?” he asked himself. “Why must my stomach make that humiliating racket?”

The next day it happened again. Minutes before lunchtime, Jimmy Prune’s belly tightened. He held his breath. He pounded his lap with his fist. But the

eruption came anyway.

RRRRR! SQUEAK! SPUT! FFT! FFT! POP! RRRRR!

Laughter filled the classroom, louder than yesterday.

“Lunchtime, class!” Mrs. Friendly announced.

In the lunchroom, Jimmy Prune ate alone. “Why-oh-why?” he kept saying.

He chomped into his sandwich and chewed hard. When he swallowed, he made a discovery.

“My gut stopped growling,” he said. “When I ate something, it got silent.”

The following day, Jimmy Prune came to school with his pockets stuffed with soda crackers. When lunchtime came, he crammed five crackers into his mouth.

He checked the clock and grinned. “Twelve o’clock, and my belly is quiet,” he said.

Yet something was wrong. At five minutes past noon, the teacher remained at her desk, grading papers. Jimmy Prune felt the entire class staring at him.

Two minutes later, the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces whispered, “Jimmy Prune, what gives? What happened to the lunch alarm?”

Jimmy Prune could only shrug.

Finally, at a quarter past lunchtime, Mrs. Friendly checked the clock. “We’re late for lunch, aren’t we?” she

said. "Please line up."

Whoosh! The students charged toward the door.

Loud Larry stood behind Jimmy Prune. "I thought she'd never dismiss us," he said. "What's wrong with your stomach, Jimmy Prune?"

Jimmy Prune replied with another shrug.

"The lunch alarm," said Larry. "You know, the way your belly makes noises right before lunch."

Jimmy Prune scowled. "Everyone thinks that's a big joke," he said.

"Are you kidding?" said Loud Larry. "Your stomach's the only thing that reminds the teacher it's lunchtime. She gets so busy that she only checks the clock when your stomach sounds off. That's what cracks us up."

Jimmy Prune placed a hand on his belly. "Rats!" he said, as the hungry line marched out the door.