



Twist

Rumbling Stomach

Lunchtime was near. Jimmy Prune sat at his desk when his stomach began to sputter.

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

He placed a hand on his lap and leaned forward

“Not again!” he groaned.

Still, the noises went on.

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

Jimmy Prune blushed to his toes. He knew what was coming next.

First, the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces giggled. Next, Loud Larry burst out laughing. Soon, the whole class was snickering.

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

Whoosh! The class grabbed their lunchboxes and formed a zig-zag line at the door. Jimmy Prune trudged to the end of the line.

“Why-oh-why?” he muttered. “Why must my belly make those embarrassing sounds every day?”

The next day, it happened again. Minutes before lunchtime, Jimmy Prune’s stomach tightened. He held his breath. He thumped his belly with his fist. He even put his math book on his lap. But the eruption came anyway.

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

Laughter filled the classroom, louder than ever.

“Lunchtime, class!” Mrs. Friendly announced.

In the lunchroom, Jimmy Prune sat by himself. “Why-oh-why?” he said, shaking his head. “How can I stop those awful sounds?”

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

“My gut stopped growling,” he said. “That’s it!. My stomach only makes noise when it’s empty.”

The following day, Jimmy Prune came to school with his shirt pocket stuffed with soda crackers. Ten minutes before lunchtime, he crammed five crackers into his mouth. He chewed and swallowed.

A short time later, he ate three more crackers. He checked the clock and grinned.

“Twelve o’clock, and all is quiet,” he said.

Yet something was wrong. At five minutes past noon, Mrs. Friendly still sat 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 only shrugged.

Finally, twelve minutes late, the teacher checked the clock. “Oh dear, look at the time,” she said. “Please line up for lunch.”

Whoosh! The students snatched their lunchboxes and rushed to the door.

Loud Larry stood behind Jimmy Prune. “I thought she’d never dismiss us,” he said. “Hey, what’s wrong with your stomach?”

Jimmy Prune gave another shrug.

“The lunch alarm,” said Larry. “You know, the way your belly growls before lunch.”

Jimmy Prune scowled. “Yeah, everyone thinks that’s a big joke.”

“Are you kidding?” said Loud Larry. “Your stomach’s the only thing that reminds the teacher it’s lunchtime. She gets so busy, she only checks the clock when your belly goes off. That’s what cracks us up.”

Jimmy Prune placed a hand on his shirt pocket. “Well, how about that,” he said, as the hungry line of students marched out the door. “Jimmy Prune, the human lunch alarm.”