

BENCHMARK • N

Sally Takayama's Worst Day Ever



Written by Katherine Follett
Illustrated by John Kastner

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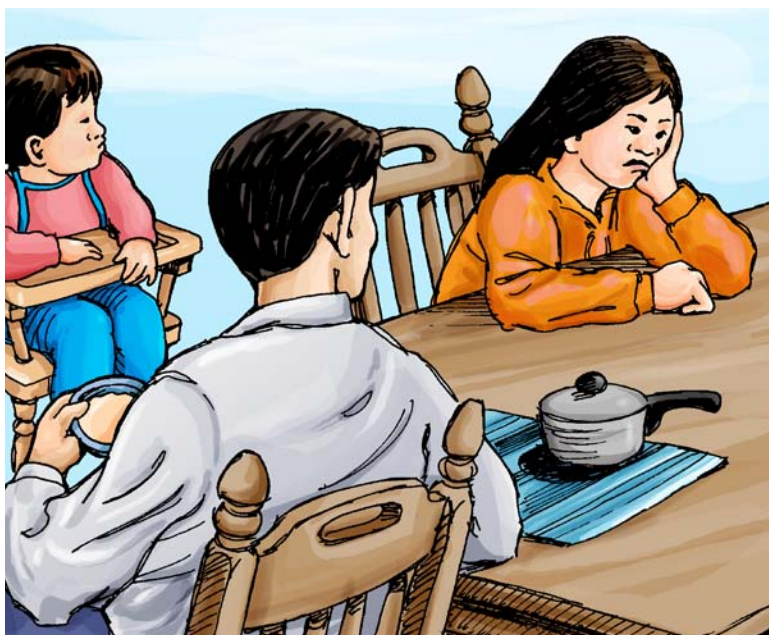


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Sally Takayama slammed the front door behind her and flung her book bag on the kitchen table. Her little brother Michael, who was only eighteen months old, looked a little frightened in his high chair.

Sally's father looked concerned as well. He set down Michael's baby food spoon and faced Sally, who had slumped in her kitchen chair.



“Is something wrong?” he asked.

“Nothing, except that this has been the worst day ever, in my whole life!” Sally snapped.

“What possibly could have happened to make this the worst day in your whole life?”

Sally rubbed her tired eyes with her fists. In addition to being horrible, her day had also been long, and she was getting a headache.



“Well, first of all,” she began, “I stopped to pull a dime out from a crack in the sidewalk on my way to the bus stop, but by the time I got it out, it turned out to be just a penny. Then I was late for the bus, but as I ran to catch it, my shoestring broke and my shoe fell off! It was too late to run back and get it. I’m glad I found it again near the bus stop on my way home, but it looks like someone ran over it.”

Sally’s father peered under the table, and sure enough, Sally’s left shoe was black and grimy and bore the distinct shape of a tire tread.

“Going to school with only one shoe was no fun,” she continued.

“Bobby Danforth was sitting right in the first bus seat, and he spotted my bare sock and started calling me Sock-Shoe Sally.”



“Then the whole bus started teasing me like that. When I got to school, I didn’t want to get my sock dirty, so I didn’t play at recess. I just sat on the steps holding my bare foot up. But then in the cafeteria, Mary spilled her chocolate milk on the floor and I stepped in it! Now my new yellow socks are all brown, and Bobby Danforth started calling me Chocolate-Sock Sally. But the worst part was when the principal noticed that I didn’t have a shoe. She asked me what happened, and when I told her about the dime, she laughed!”

“Oh, I don’t think she was laughing at you, Sally. She probably just thought it was a funny story,” Sally’s father said sympathetically.

“Either way, after she stopped laughing, she brought me to her office and took out these smelly old running shoes. She told me I could wear them for the rest of the day. They must have been a million sizes too big—I looked like a clown!” Sally wailed.



“Mrs. Anderson is a pretty small woman. I can’t imagine her shoes were that big,” Sally’s father said. “It was very nice of her to loan you her shoes.”

“Well, when I went to gym class, they went clop, clop, clop on the gym floor every time I took a step. Well, one of them went clop, clop, clop, while the other went squish, squish because of the chocolate milk in my sock. It made me miss the volleyball, and the whole team got mad at me.”

“They won’t remember it tomorrow,” Sally’s father reassured her.

“Then I had to give the principal her shoes back and ride the bus all the way home again. Bobby Danforth wouldn’t quit. I think that’s a pretty bad day, don’t you?” Sally asked.

“Sounds pretty bad to me, but you forgot about the one good thing that happened today,” Sally’s father said.

“No good things happened today!” Sally objected.

“Oh yes, one did,” he said. “You certainly had fun telling me this story!”

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