The Loaf with a Smile



A small mark becomes a warm surprise.

A short story to enjoy together

The Loaf with a Smile

At Uncle Sanjay's bakery, bread came in many shapes. There were long loaves, little rolls, and round loaves that looked like sleepy moons.

Tara liked watching the dough rise. It never seemed to move while she watched, but somehow it grew.

One morning Uncle Sanjay gave her a small piece of dough.

"What shall we make?"

Tara rolled it into a ball. She pressed it gently with clean hands.

"Someone who is happy," she said.

Uncle Sanjay put the dough on a baking tray. With his bread tool, he made two short marks and one curved mark where Tara pointed.

"Why do you cut the top?" Tara asked.

"The cuts give the bread places to open as it grows in the oven."

The oven was hot, so Uncle Sanjay put the tray inside while Tara stood back.

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They washed the table. They counted paper bags. They listened to the clock.

At last a delicious smell filled the bakery.

Uncle Sanjay brought out the loaf and set it on the rack to cool.

The little marks had opened wide. Their happy face had a rather surprised smile.

Tara laughed. "It looks as if someone has told it a joke!"

When the bread was cool enough, Uncle Sanjay cut it into slices. Tara saved the curved end for Grandpa, who was coming to lunch.

"What happened to your face?" he asked the loaf.

"We ate its eyebrows," said Tara.

Grandpa tasted his slice. Then he gave Tara a very large smile of his own.

It was a lovely thing to take home from a bakery.

THE END

LET'S TALK

What changed while the bread baked? What shape would you like to make from dough?

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