

Cliffhanger Story by River Starr – Grade 4

Our story begins inside of a fridge inside of a kitchen. In the fridge lives foods of all kinds. In the far back there is a group of forgotten foods, one of which is Muffin. Muffin is a chocolate chip muffin that went stale long ago. Even if he's stale, he still has a very interesting life in the Back. He has some nice friends: Celery, Orange, and Marinara Sauce. Muffin goes to a simple school, known as Bread Bag Prep. Muffin's teacher is *very* mean. Her name is Miss Lemon, and she is the most sour food you will ever meet (or eat).

One day, in class, Miss Lemon is teaching her students about the dangers of The Kitchen. Muffin learned that the Foods are basically trapped in the fridge. You can only get out if a Hooman opens the "Door to the World". If you make it out without being caught, your luck won't last long. If you are a Veggie or Fruit, you'll likely be drowned in the Sink, which totally lives up to its name. If you're part of the Grain family, you'll crumble. If you come from Meat descent, you'll burn. And Dairy, um... who knows what happens to Dairy?

After yet another long and boring day of school, Muffin is ready for a nap. That's when he realizes that his parents – Mama Muffin and Papa Murphy – are gone!

"Oh no!", shrieked Muffin. "My parents! They're gone!"

Next door, Celery hears Muffin's cry and rushes to see what was the problem.

"What's wrong?", asked Celery, ready to attack.

"My parents have been kidnapped!" bawled Muffin, becoming quite soggy indeed. He knew it, his parents were gone. They would never come back.

"I think I know where they are," said a voice coming from out the window.

"Grand-Papa John! You said you know where they are?"

"Yes, I do. They are out of the fridge."

"Wait, what?" said Celery and Muffin at the same time.

"They are out of the fridge. If you want to find them, you have to venture out of the fridge."

"But... How did the Hoomans find them?" questioned Muffin, still scared. "We live in the Back, so no one can find us."

"Unless it's Spring Cleaning," said Grand-Papa John.

"*Spring Cleaning?* Is it this time of year *again?*" said Celery, shocked.

“Yes, it is. In fact –” Grand-Papa John was interrupted by the loud *GRKKK* of the fridge door opening. An enormous Hooman hand reached in to grab the food. Grand-Papa John let out some sort of un-muffin scream as the hand squeezed around his polka-dotted liner. And just like that, Grand-Papa John was gone.

“NOOOOO!” bellowed Celery and Muffin.

“We have to find them! We have to save them! I have a plan,” squawked Muffin as he pulled out a piece of paper from his backpack.

“So, first we have to get to the front, so we can be taken by a Hooman. Then, we have to find my family. And after that, we head back, safe and happy,” said Muffin, drawing out the plan.

“Seems pretty straight-forward.”

“Yeah! Now pack your bag.”

“We’re going *now*?”

“*Obviously.*”

After Celery and Muffin packed up their backpacks with some snacks and a blanket, they were off on the adventure. Like the plan, they first had to get to the front. That was easy, because all they had to do was ride the bus. They gave the driver some M&Ms, which luckily he took, because the kids didn’t have a ticket.

Muffin and Celery were standing boldly at the front of the fridge, hands on hips, ready to be taken. Celery’s mother, Wendy, once told him a long time ago that when the Hoomans do Spring Cleaning, they put all the food in a pile, so the kids knew exactly where to go. Soon, the ginormous door opened and the Hooman’s hand came in and groped for food. Muffin was taken first. He screamed as he flew up in the air and was tossed into a pile.

Yuck, he thought. *That Hooman’s hand really did stink.*

He waited for celery, and soon enough, there he was, screaming as well. After they recovered from the fright, they began to call out Muffin’s familys’ name.

“Papa Murphy?”

“Mama Muffin?”

“Grand-Papa John?”

“Where are you?”

There was no answer coming from anywhere. Silence. The occasional screaming of an innocent victim. But still no sound of Papa Murphy, Mama Muffin, or Grand-Papa John.

Suddenly, they heard a cough coming from behind the pepper and salt. It was Papa Murphy!

“Papaaaa!” squealed Muffin as he ran over to embrace his father. “I thought I lost you forever!”

“Me too,” said Papa Murphy.

“Where’s Mama?” Asked Muffin.

“Here I am!” Said the familiar high-pitched voice of Mama Muffin.

“Mamaaaa!” Muffin hugged his parents tightly. He was glad they were okay.

“You were so brave to get out of the fridge, dear”, said Mama Muffin.

“AAAAAARGH!” an odd sounding grunt-ish scream came from the stove. No one could make a sound like that, except for...

“GRAND-PAPA JOHN!” everyone yelled as they ran over to the stove. Grand-Papa John was jumping around on the frying pan like a maniac (which of course, he already is).

“I have to save him!” Muffin said heroically. He jogged over to the frying pan and jumped just as the big, dark, shadow of a Hooman blanketed the muffins and stove.