

Eeny meeny miny moe



One evening, after a supper completely lacking in tantrums and arguments, I said, “Well, Melise, what will we have for dessert?”

Melise, my clever and creative 3-year-old, jumped up enthusiastically and said, “Let me go see!”

I had no idea where she was going until she arrived at a certain cabinet in which the jello boxes are hidden. We keep a child lock on that cabinet, but I had forgotten to latch it, as usual. She pulled out all the jello boxes and laid them out on the floor in a line.

“Which one, Mommy?” I walked over to review the choices.

“Hmm,” I said, “Strawberry, berry blue, orange, lemon, pistachio pudding or vanilla pudding. I don’t know, honey. Which one do you want?”

“I don’t know, Mommy. Which one do you want?”

We went back and forth, politely trying to make the other person decide until I said, “You know, I’m just not much of a jello person. How about ice cream?”

“No-ho-ho-ho,” she chuckled. “Silly Mommy,” she waved to the boxes, “Which one?”

“Chocolate cake?”

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Written by Susan Pfaltzgraff

“No, no, no,” she shook her head emphatically, “Which one?!”

I tried to suggest ice cream again with no more luck. Then I said, “I know! How about tapioca pudding? I really like tapioca!” I pulled the box down and set it with the others.

She looked at the box, shook her head and then put it behind her back. “I hide yours so you can’t see it,” she said with an impish grin.

I shook my head. “Well, that was my choice, so you’re going to have to pick all by yourself. You think about it while I put the clean dishes away.” I walked off to the kitchen. I could hear her shuffling boxes around. Then she opened the cabinet and closed it again. I walked back to her and saw that she had fewer boxes now.

“You’ve narrowed the field?” I surveyed the remaining boxes: strawberry, berry blue, and orange. “Tapioca didn’t make the cut?” She laughed at me—such a silly mommy I am!

She said, “Which one?”

“It’s still your choice. Which one will you pick?”

“I don’t know.” She frowned and looked very troubled.

“I know what we’ll do!” I sat on the ground in front of her, with the boxes between us. I pointed to each box and did a round of eeny, meeny, miny, moe. Finally, I landed upon berry blue. I handed it to her, “This is what we’ll have!”

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Melise shook her head, “No, you did it wrong.”

“I did?”

“Yeah, it goes Cinderella miny moe, hexa hampa hoda ho ...” she chanted nonsense words for a minute as she poked at boxes and ended with three “Cinderellas” in a row. Then she picked up the strawberry box.

“This one!” she said proudly.

We made the jello with many pauses to taste the bright red liquid. After a brief time in the fridge, she ate a few spoonfuls then stuck her hands in it. I threw it away after she had thoroughly mushed it between her fingers. Considering the fun we had picking that flavor, it didn’t seem like that much of a waste in the end!

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