



Emma Waits for Dough

A story for Emma

TuckBook

The main character of this story: **Emma**

Emma scraped a pale lump of dough from her wooden spoon into the biggest mixing bowl. Her yellow apron already wore a dusting of flour. “If we start now,” she said, “can the rolls be warm for tonight’s August gathering, before school begins again?”

Her family had come to the kitchen to make a small basket of rolls for everyone who would gather around the dining table. Emma had stirred the yeast, milk, flour, and butter until her arm felt pleasantly wobbly. Now the dough sat in the bowl, smooth and still, as if it had decided to take a nap.

Her father draped a clean dough cloth over the bowl. “It needs time to puff up,” he said. “Then we can shape it.” Emma pressed one finger against the cloth. “Could it puff up straight away?”

“Only if it were a balloon,” said her mother. Emma pictured the whole bowl floating to the ceiling with her wooden spoon dangling underneath. She giggled, but then she sighed. The gathering had seemed so close when she was stirring. Now it seemed to be waiting behind a very slow door.





Emma looked at the August apples in a crate by the dining-room doorway, striped red and yellow and smelling faintly of leaves. “I can sort the apples while the dough thinks,” she decided. She made three rows: shiny ones, speckled ones, and little ones. One little apple escaped, rolled along the table, and bumped the wooden spoon so it bobbed in the empty bowl like a boat.

When the apples were sorted, Emma carried the best ones carefully to a blue dish in the dining area. She chose the speckled apples for slices and saved the smallest ones for cooking tomorrow. “We could put apples on the table first,” she said. “Then nobody has to wait at the door for rolls.” Her family agreed, and the gathering changed into a meal that could begin gently and grow warmer.

Next Emma made paper labels for the basket: WARM ROLLS, APPLE SLICES, and HONEY BUTTER. Her first label said WARM RLOLS. She stared at it, then held it upside down. “Those rolls have their coats on backward,” she said. Everyone laughed, and Emma made a new one with careful, round letters.





At last, while she tucked the labels beneath the basket handle, Emma noticed something her busy hands had missed. The dough cloth had lifted in the middle. Along its edge, tiny bubbles had pushed up like little hills. “Look!” she called. “It has been working while we were working!”

The dough was twice as big now and soft enough to spring back after a gentle poke. Emma sprinkled flour on the counter. Her father tipped out the dough, and together they rolled it into a long, plump rope. Emma used both hands to pinch off pieces, fold each piece inward, and tuck it into a round roll. A few came out tall, a few squashed, and one looked exactly like a sleeping snail. Emma put that one in the middle of the tray.

Her mother slid the tray into the hot oven while Emma stood safely beside the kitchen table. Then there was nothing to do but wait once more. This wait felt different. The table was set. The labels rested under the basket handle. The apples shone in their blue dish, and Emma’s floury wooden spoon lay across the mixing bowl like a tired little bridge.





Soon a buttery smell drifted through both rooms. When her mother brought out the tray, steam curled from the golden rolls. Emma used a cloth to help hold the basket steady while her father placed the warm rolls inside. Even the snail-shaped one had baked into a cheerful, round bump.

By the time the family gathered at the table, the first apple slices were already being passed around, and the rolls were warm enough to pull apart. Emma chose one from the basket and shared it with her mother. Outside the dining-room window, the last light rested on the apple crate. Emma's apron was floury, her hands were tired, and the slow, cozy meal tasted better because it had taken time to make.





Good night, Emma.



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After the story



WHAT THIS STORY IS ABOUT

Emma learns that warm rolls need patient waiting as she prepares an August meal with apples and dough. Her small kitchen tasks turn the long wait into a cozy family gathering.

TALK ABOUT IT AFTER READING

After reading, ask: “Emma, which moment felt the warmest or bravest today?”

AND TOMORROW...

The next morning, Emma notices the smallest apples waiting to become something new in her mixing bowl.





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6 minutes of reading



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