



Bittersweet Chocolate

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In Miss Buttercup's kitchen cupboard,
way up there on the top shelf,
There were five bars of chocolate,
one on top of the other,
wrapped in shiny, silvery foil,

Crunchy chocolate with rice krispies,
Yummy chocolate with almonds,
Nutty chocolate with nuts,
Creamy chocolate with strawberry filling

And last but not least, a big bar
of bittersweet chocolate.

All beautifully wrapped and soooo goood!





Miss Buttercup's family had chocolate for dessert every single day:

monday



On Monday -
chocolate
with nuts,

tuesday



On Tuesday -
chocolate with
strawberry filling,

wednesday



On Wednesday -
chocolate with
rice krispies

thursday



And on Thursday -
chocolate with
almonds.



By Friday, Bittersweet was left
all alone in the cupboard,
surrounded by all the empty wrappings
that her friends had left behind.

Bittersweet peered out hopefully –
Why wasn't anybody coming to eat her?



She waited all day long,
And then another day,
A whole week went by,
Two whole weeks – and still, nobody claimed her.

Finally, Bittersweet was so upset that she started pacing up and down the shelf. Right, then left, and suddenly she met a box of rice.



"I wonder if I'll turn into chocolate with rice krispies if I eat a few grains of rice? Then maybe someone will want me..." Bittersweet thought.

She was a bit worried, but finally she popped a few grains of rice into her mouth.

"Yuck," she sputtered, spitting them out. "Why would anyone want chocolate with rice krispies? That's sooo not me!"





Bittersweet went back to her place and sat down to wait. Nothing happened.

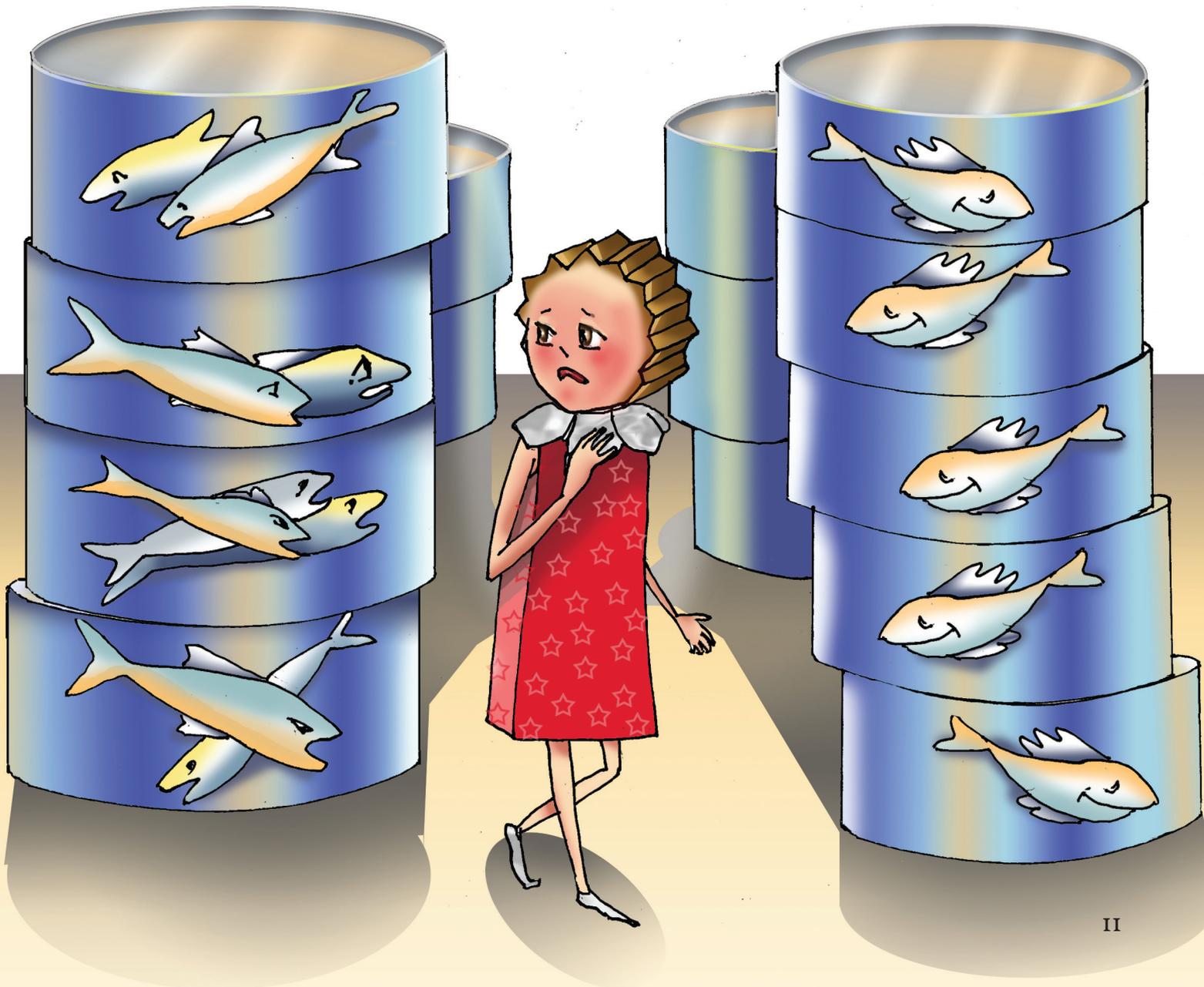
Bittersweet was really surprised.
"If people like rice, which is pretty weird and tasteless, how come they don't want me?
After all, I'm super sweet and sooo yummy..."

The next day, Bittersweet went for another stroll through the cupboard and met a bunch of cans. She sidled up as close as she could and started reading the labels:

"Tuna fish in oil."

"Sardines."

"Who could possibly like sardines?" she wondered and scuttled away as fast as she could.



At the other end of the shelf she suddenly saw a smiling face. She cried, "Hey! Hi! Do you by any chance like bittersweet chocolate?"

But the smiling face just continued to smile and didn't say a word.



Bittersweet came a bit closer and read what it said on the box:
"Oatmeal."

"Ahh, that's what they like to eat around here!

"Maybe, if I eat a few flakes, I'll turn into
oatmeal-flavored chocolate..." she wondered.

But Bittersweet changed her mind right away:

"No way! I'm not going to change who I am,
no matter what!"





Determined to be herself, Bittersweet continued her stroll through the shelves.

She met up with a lot of little jars of spices, all standing in a row.

She smelled and sniffed till she felt a bit faint,
And then she went back to her place and
sat down to wait, and wait, and wait,
Till finally she fell asleep.

A few more days went by, and still, nobody came for her. Bittersweet was so sad that huge chocolaty tears streamed from her eyes and streaked the shelf. Just that day, Miss Buttercup happened to open the cupboard, and oh was she ever angry when she saw those streaks of chocolate messing up the shelf! She got a sponge and rubbed and scrubbed till the shelf was squeaky clean.



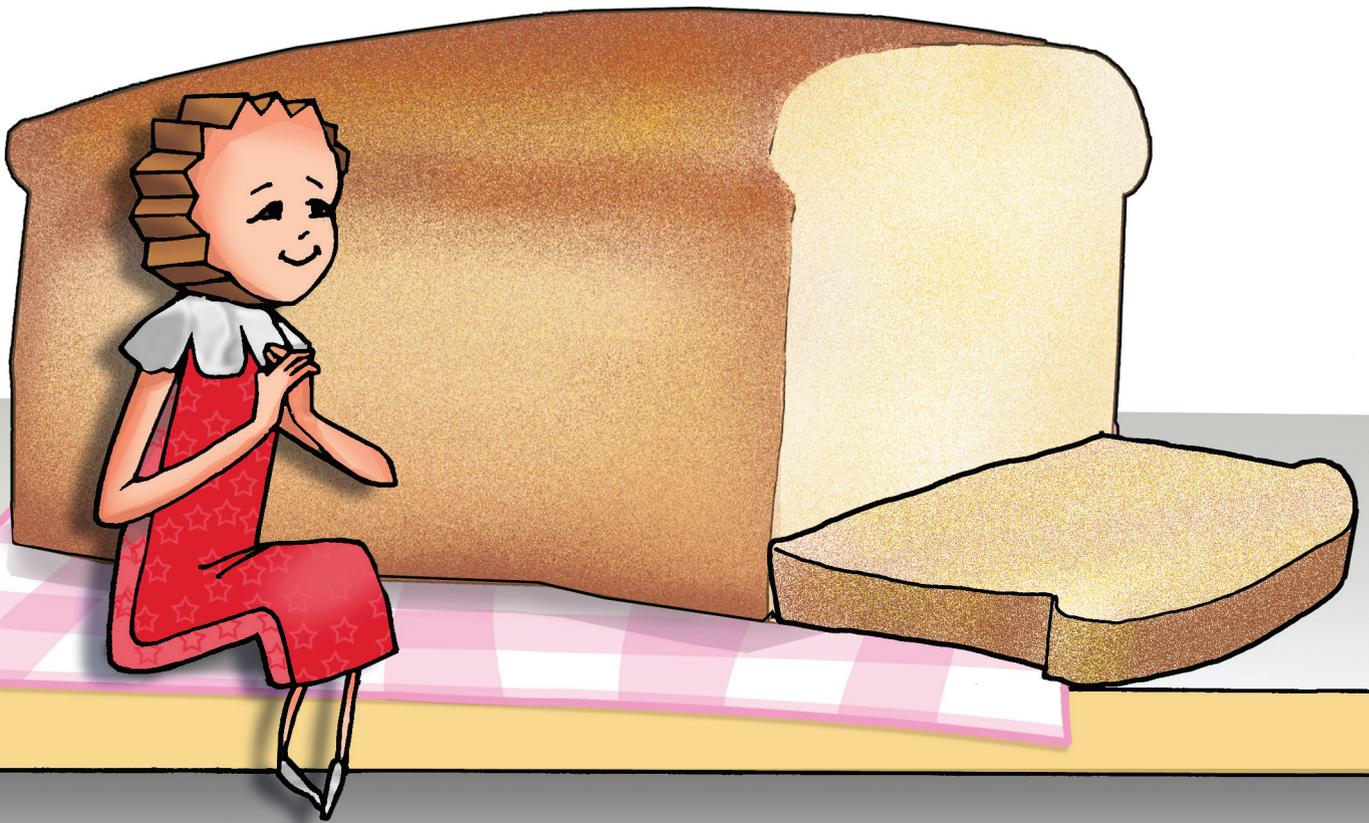
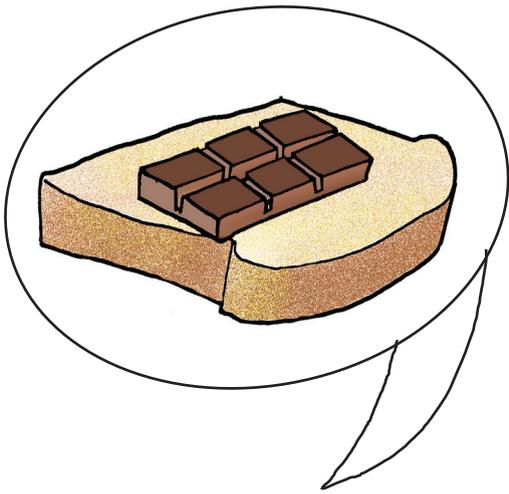
She never even stopped to wonder who'd been crying up there on the shelf...

"Maybe it's my location?" Bittersweet asked herself
the next morning.

"Maybe they can't see me here?"

"I think I should move!"

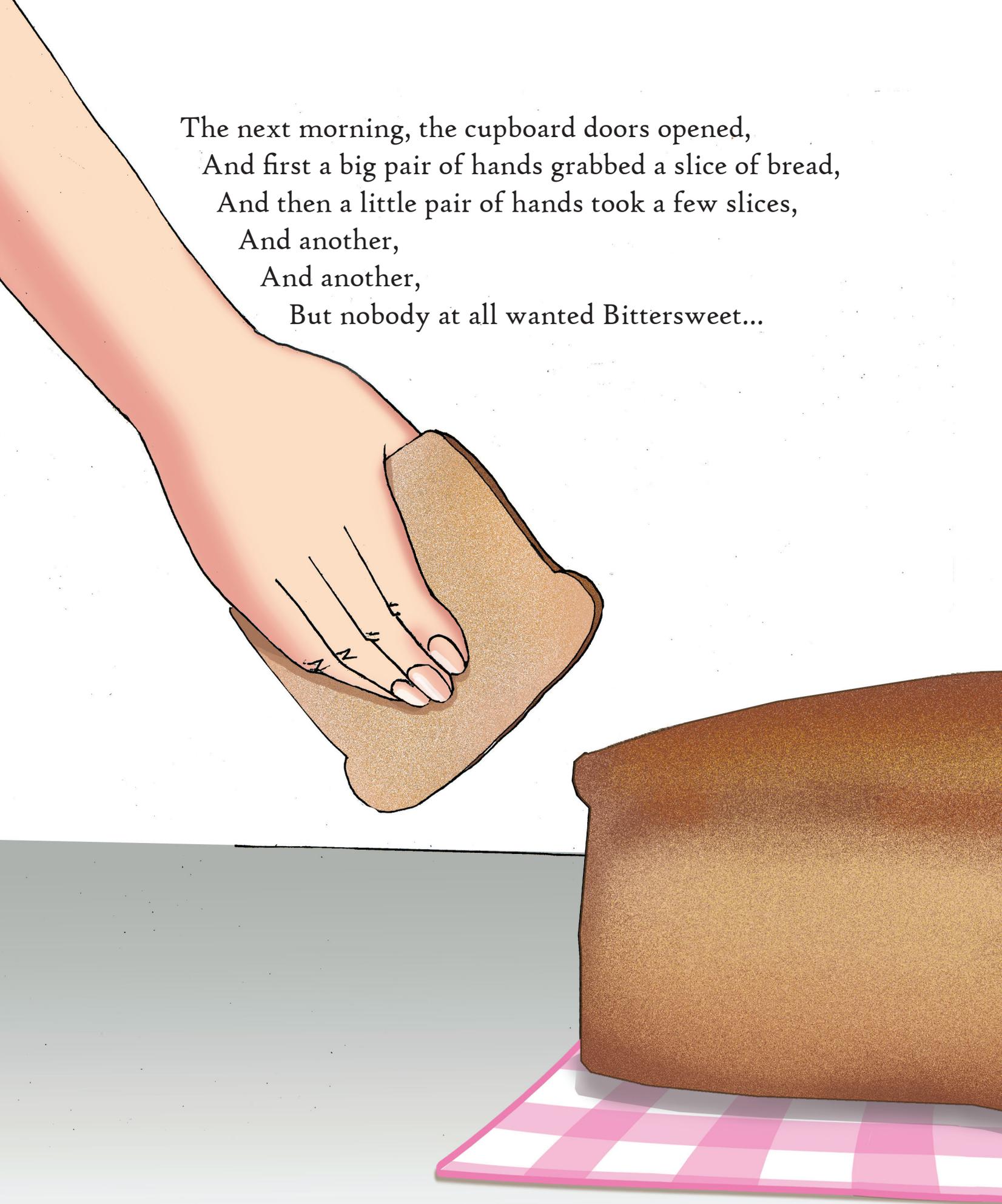




She gave it quite a lot of thought and finally decided to move to the front of the shelf, right next to the bread.

"After all, everybody loves bread! They all eat at least a slice a day, and sometimes two or three! And what could be tastier than a nice slice of bread with a big slab of bittersweet chocolate on top?"

The next morning, the cupboard doors opened,
And first a big pair of hands grabbed a slice of bread,
And then a little pair of hands took a few slices,
And another,
And another,
But nobody at all wanted Bittersweet...

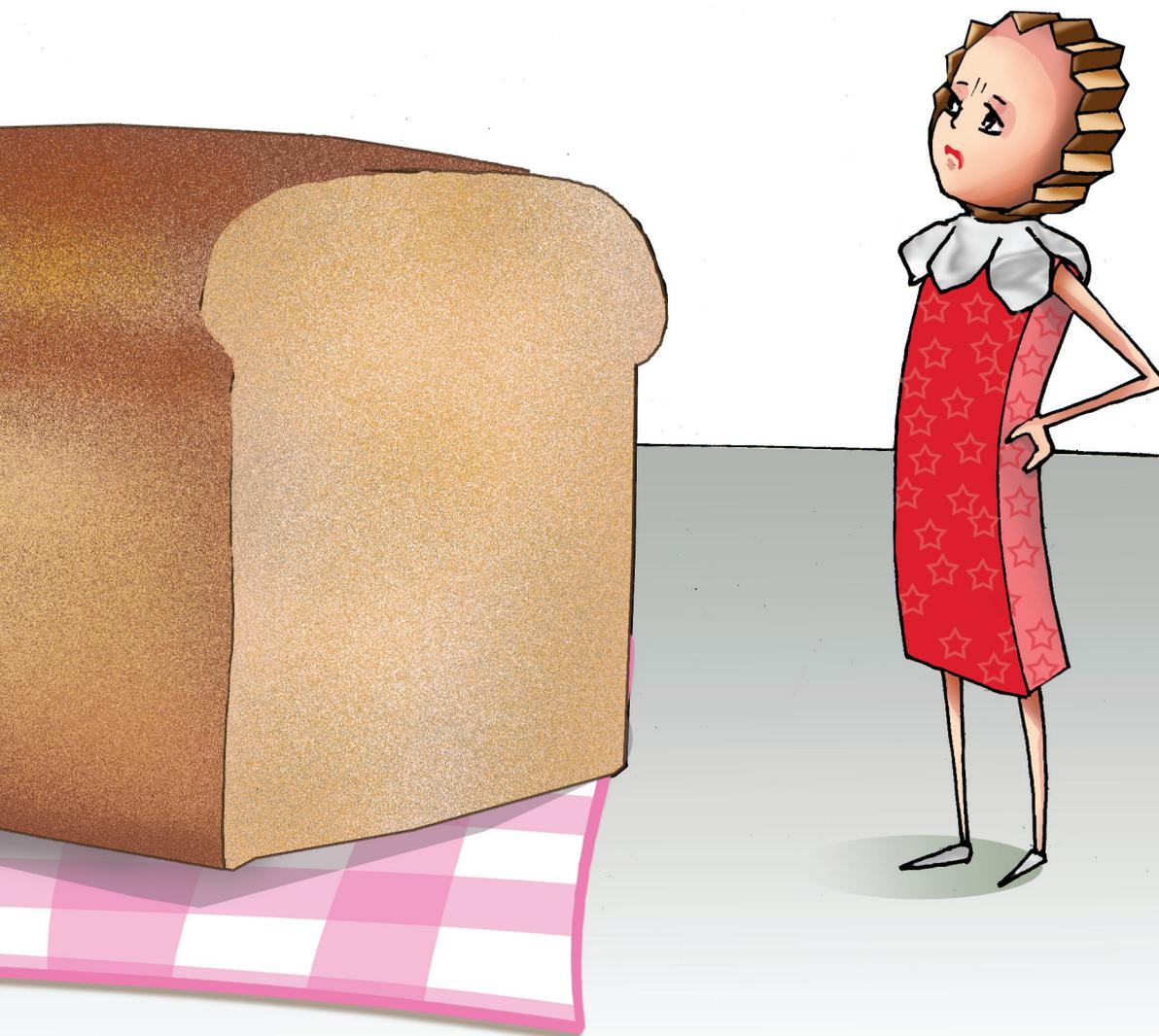


By now, Bittersweet was really mad.

"This is really too much!

If they don't like bittersweet chocolate,
how come Miss Buttercup bought me?

If I'd stayed in the supermarket, somebody else, somebody
who just loves bittersweet chocolate would have bought me
and probably gobbled me up before they even got home!"



Suddenly she heard people talking in the kitchen. And just like she always did, she sat up straight and waited, hoping against hope...

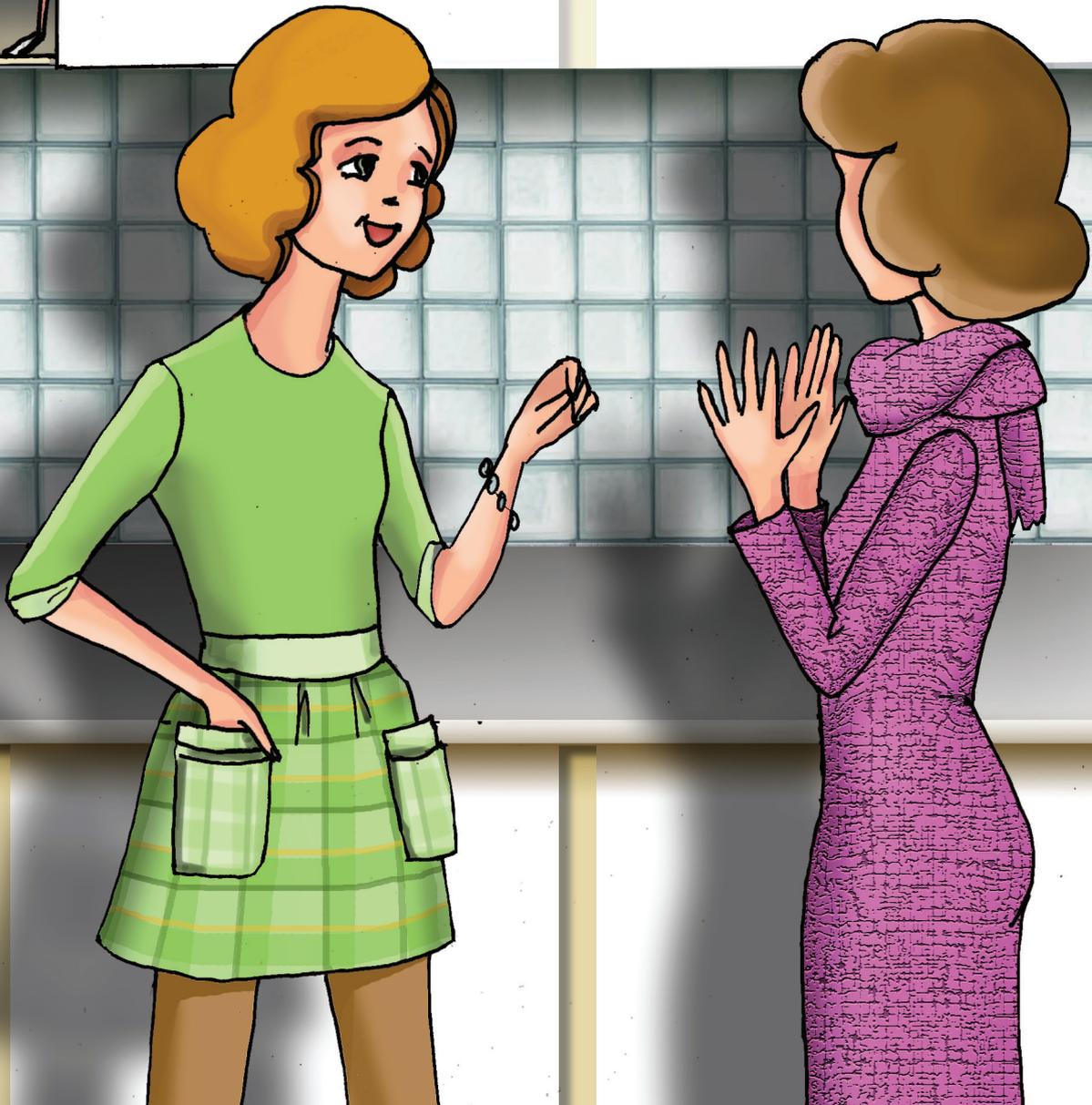
The cupboard door opened.

"You know what, I think I do have a bar that's just been sitting in the cupboard for more than a month," Miss Buttercup said.

"Really? Awesome," replied an unfamiliar voice.

It was Miss Buttercup's next-door neighbor.

"You've had it here for a whole month and nobody ate it? I can't believe it!"



"It's really quite simple. You see, nobody in our family likes bittersweet chocolate," said Miss Buttercup.

"I bought it by mistake."



"Weird," said the neighbor. "We just love bittersweet, more than any other flavor. Whenever I buy a bar it's the first one everyone fights over. That's exactly why I'm all out! Now I just have to bake a chocolate cake and I don't have any chocolate."

Bittersweet was so excited.

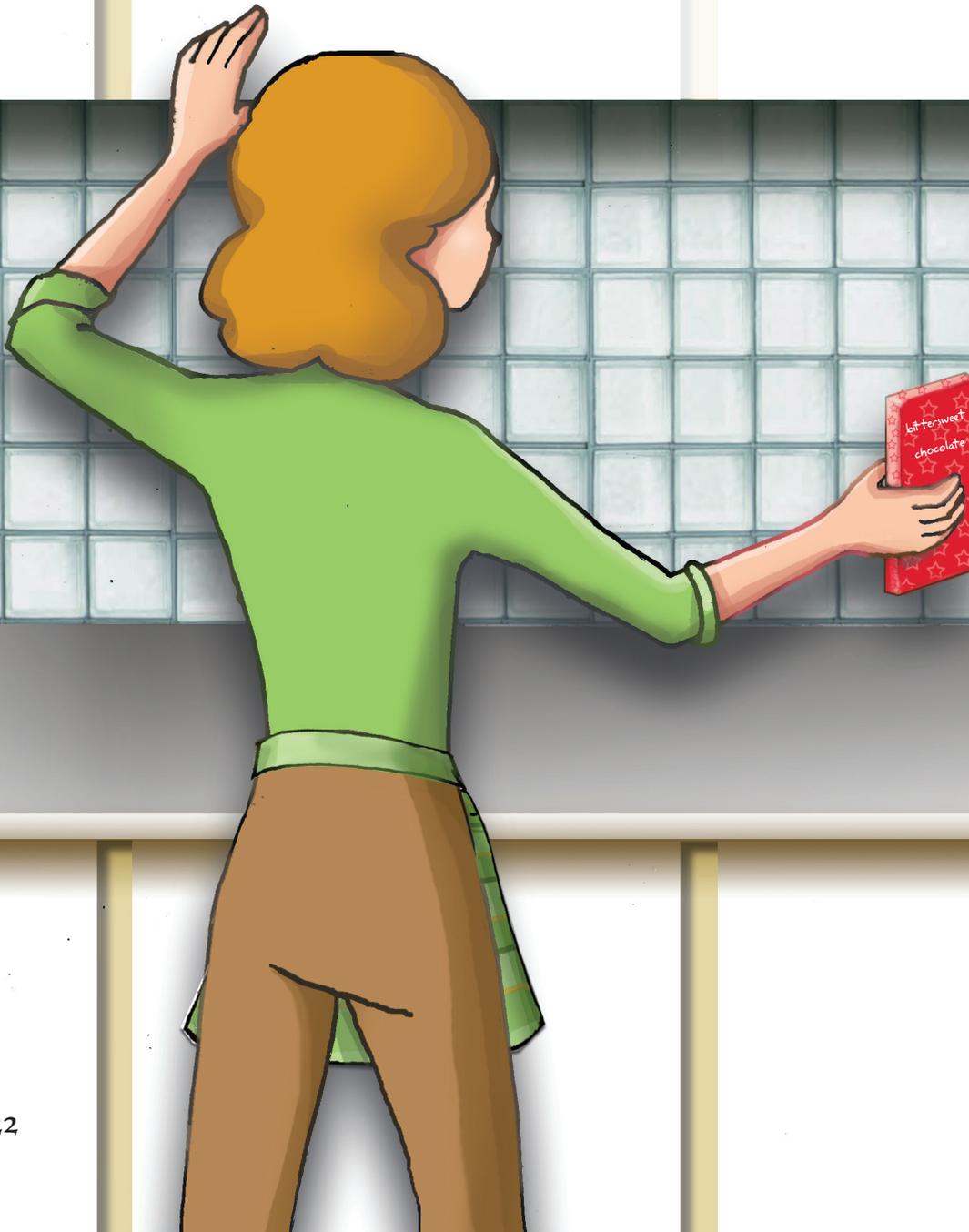
Her heart was pounding ecstatically.

She listened closely and tried not to miss a word:

"Well," Miss Buttercup said, "You know how it is, each to his own taste. In our family everybody prefers the sweeter flavors."

She took the bar of chocolate off the shelf and handed it to her neighbor.

"Here you are. I'm really glad that you're helping me get rid of this old chocolate bar."



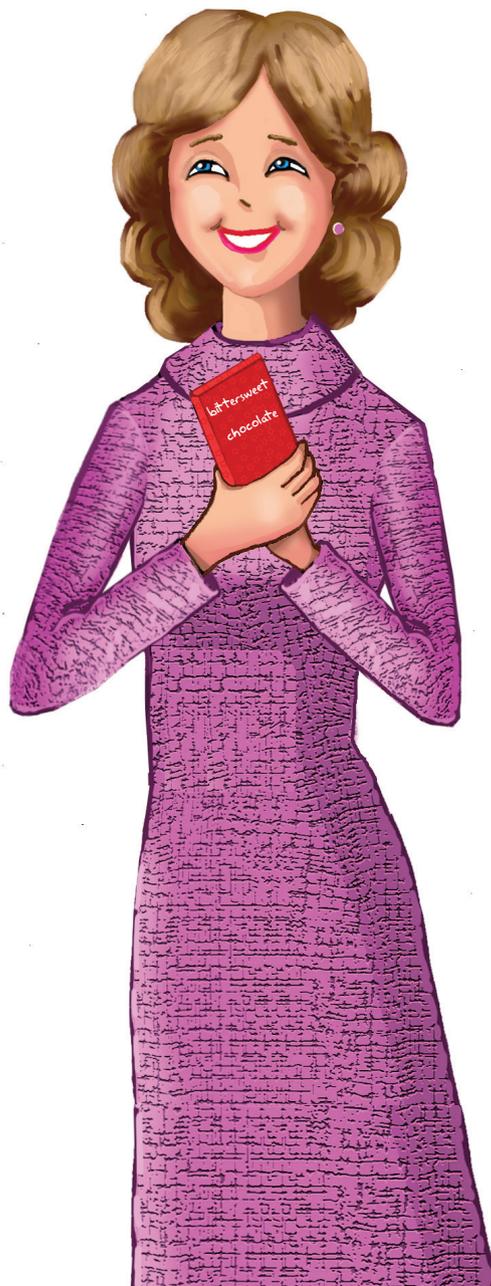
Bittersweet was really insulted by that remark.

"How can she talk about me like that?"

But she forgot all about how bad she felt the minute she saw the next-door neighbor's wide smile.

The neighbor couldn't stop thanking Miss Buttercup and she hugged Bittersweet close as if she was some amazing treasure.

"Thank you so much. This is really high-quality bittersweet chocolate and it's exactly what I need for my cake! This is great! We're going to have the best birthday cake ever!"





Bursting with joy in the next-door neighbor's arms,
Bittersweet said to herself,
"I've finally found someone
who appreciates how delicious I am!"