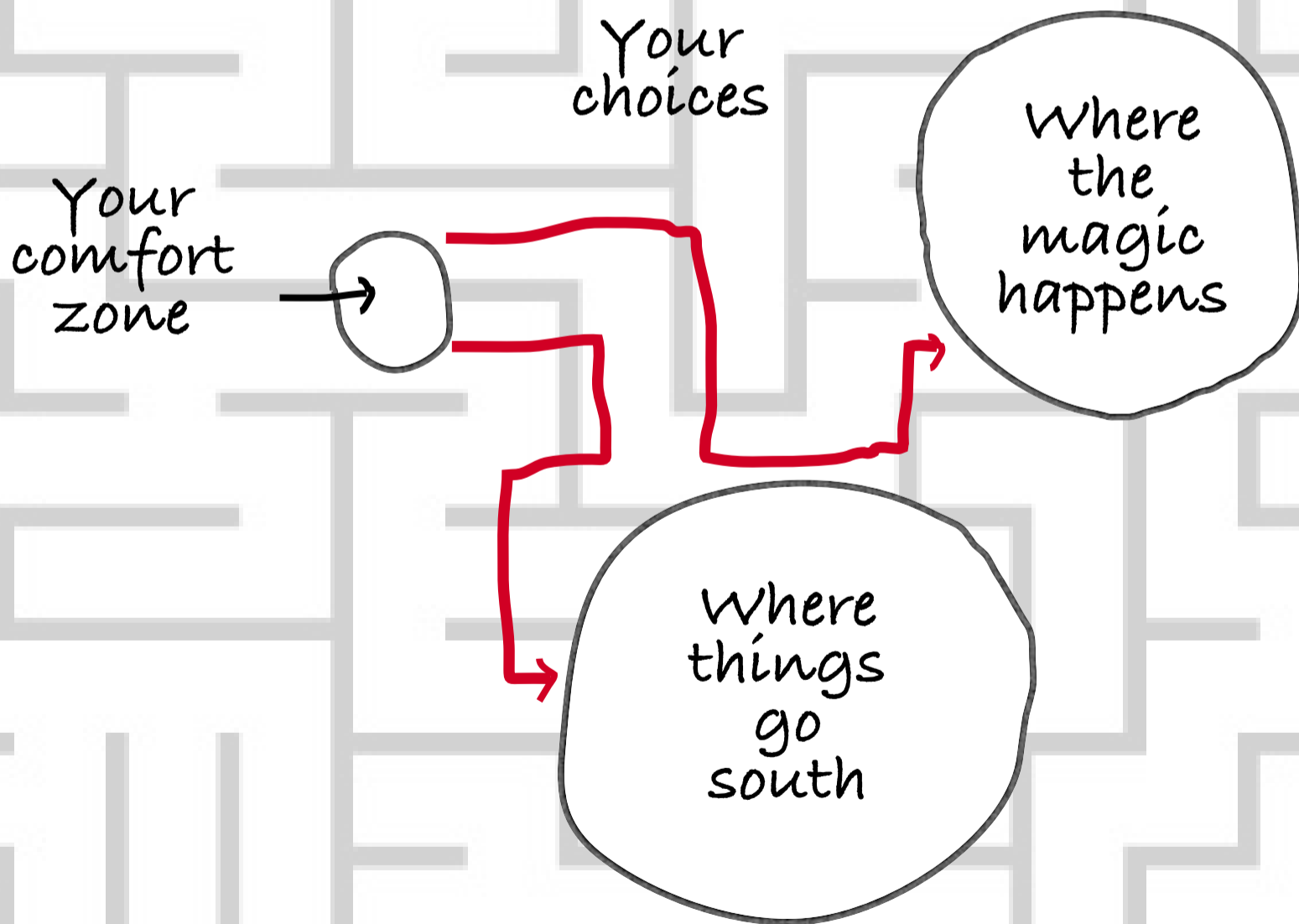


MY DAILY FOOD MAZE

~~CRYAZZY~~



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My
Daily / *Crazy*
Food Maze

Choose Well, Eat Well, Be Well

To Viv, Stefan,
Nonna & Neni

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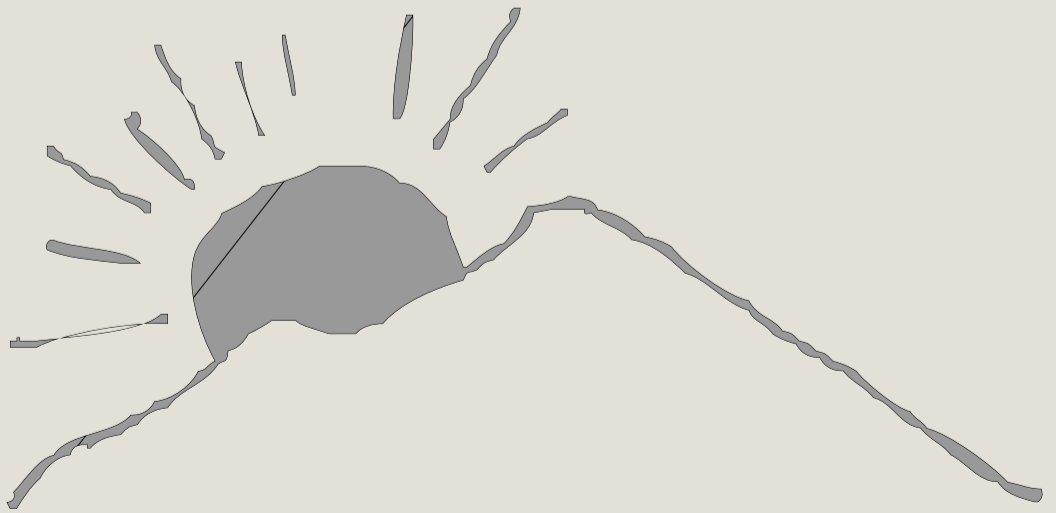
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Early Morning



BEEP... BEEP... BEEP
... BEEP



Your annoyingly loud alarm goes off. Already?

You pry open your sleepy eyes. It is only 5:00 am on a beautiful sunny Tuesday morning. Outside you can hear the rainbow lorikeets* chattering noisily. It seems that the entire world has already woken up. Not you...

You let yourself fall out of bed, throw on swimming trunks and a hoodie and drag yourself downstairs to breakfast. Tuesday mornings are tough. Tuesday mornings mean swimming squad. Your mom doesn't seem to be bothered by this early hour. She is up already fixing breakfast. And not only that. She is preparing heaps of lunches and snacks for the entire family.

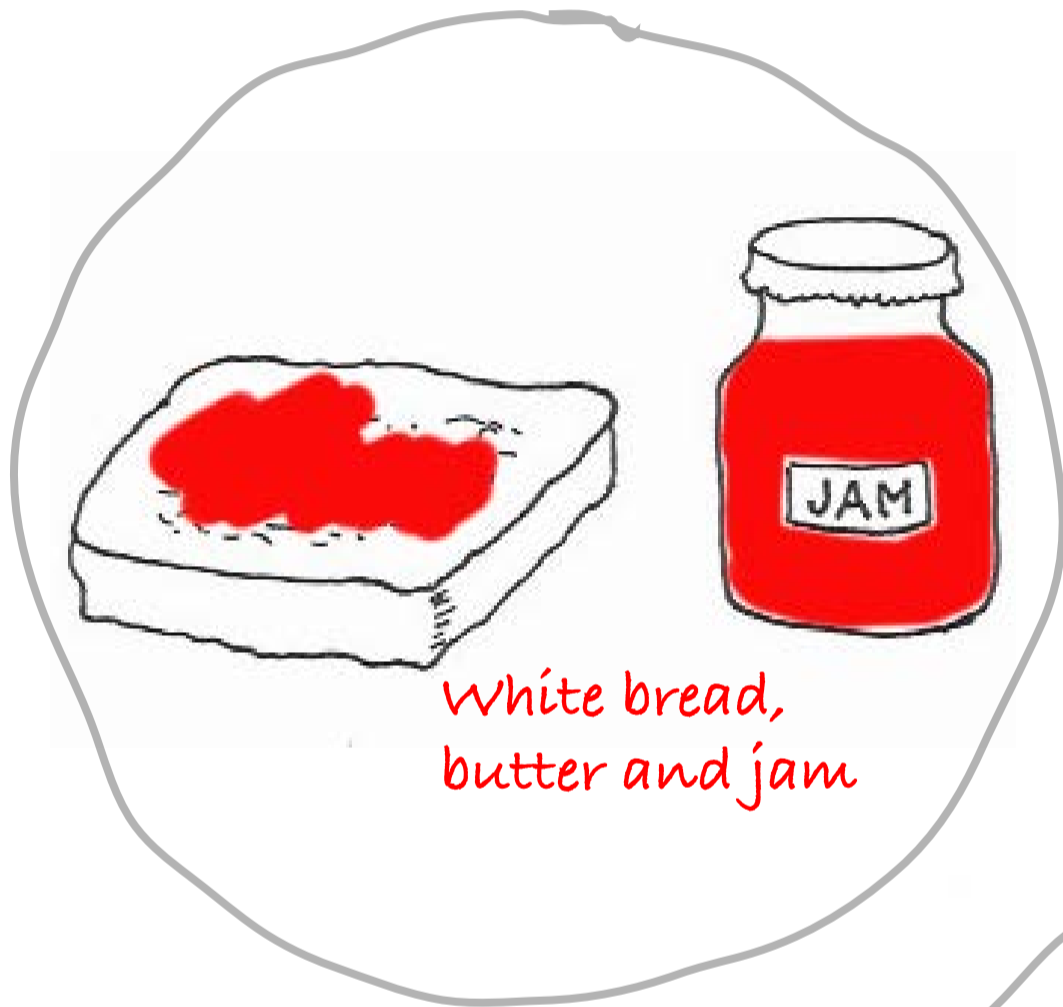
* Rainbow lorikeets are a beautiful species of parrots found in Australia

You look around and there it is:

YOUR BREAKFAST

All set up for you, waiting for you on the kitchen island.

CLICK on an image below to choose what you are having:



*white bread,
butter and jam*



*quinoa flakes,
fresh berries,
maple syrup*

Dad is already impatiently waiting in the car to give you a ride to school. You kiss mom good-bye and pick up your backpack and sports bag.

WOW, do they feel heavy.

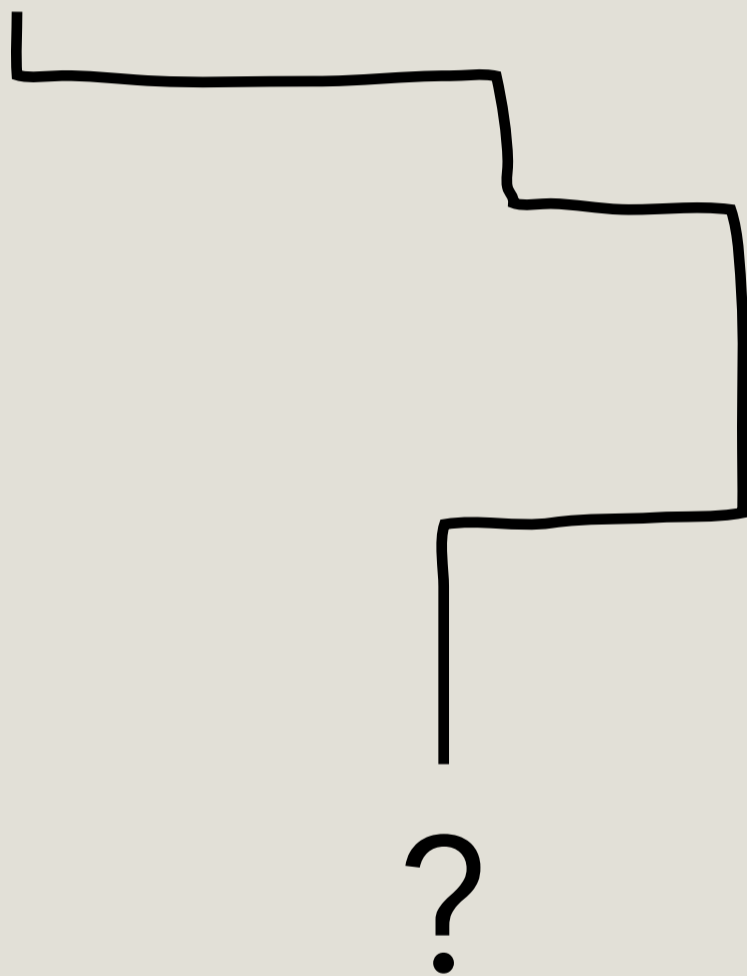
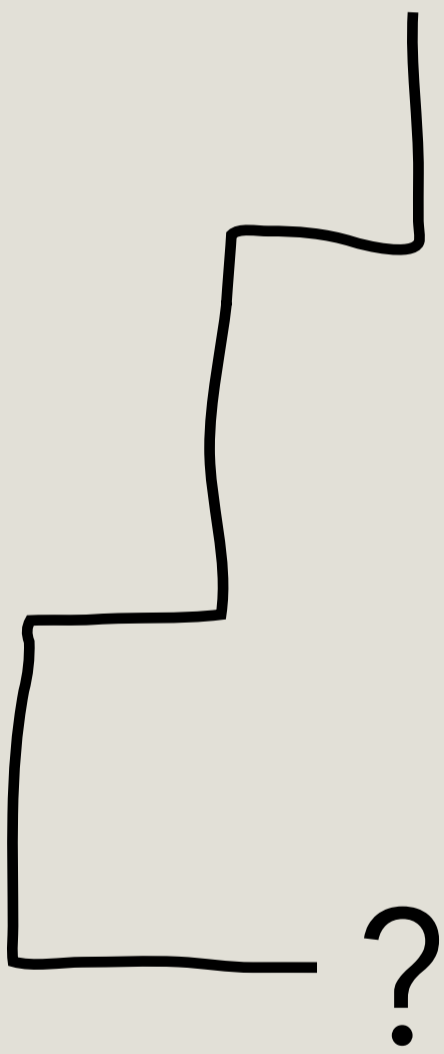
You wonder whether this time you mistakenly put bricks into your bag instead of swimming trunks and flippers. This early it's a real effort to chuck everything into the trunk.

As usual, you barely make it to the pool on time, schlepping all your gear to the locker room.

Before you hop into the pool and start your twelve lap warm up, you look around and remind yourself how much you actually enjoy the serenity of the morning sun and the clouds being mirrored in the water. As you dive in, the cool water sends an energizing bolt down your spine.

How exciting to be back in the pool!

30 minutes later...



Completely surprised, you feel that your arms and legs are slowly getting heavier and heavier. What in the world is going on? Don't panic, it will pass, this can only be a temporary loss of energy. Or could it be the beginning of that rare nerve degenerative* disease that Aunt Mathilda told you about during your visit at her morbid mansion last year? This sudden onset of disease, you have to admit, would be extremely unlikely. You continue to push hard to keep up with the others, but to no avail.

Only 10 more meters to the end of the pool. Nine meters, eight meters...you can do it!

Come on, you can do it! **YES, YES...!**

Oh no, you can't do it! Your limbs have turned into sacks of rocks and they are dragging you to the bottom of the pool. **OUCH**, you can't believe it, your left calf starts cramping up! You feel like you've turned into an anchor sinking to the ocean floor.

You are stunned but slowly, the reality of what is happening is literally sinking in:

* 'degenerative' means progressive loss of function

*YOU
ARE
ABOUT
TO
DROWN
IN
THE
SCHOOL
POOL!!*

All of a sudden, out of nowhere, you hear an enormous dull sound. Could it be a **SPLASH** of some sort? Somebody jumping into the pool? A wall of tiny air bubbles makes it impossible to see what it is. A strong hand grabs you by the arm and pulls you to the surface. **AIR!**

Immediately, the crisp morning air fills your lungs again.
Slowly, you turn your head to take a close look at your savior.

Goodness gracious, it's Mr. Cash, the head coach! No one has ever seen him inside the pool. **NEVER.**

How embarrassing!! He should have just let you drown and spared you the humiliation!

On the way to the showers, you can sense the pitiful stares of the other swimmers on your back. Definitely not a good feeling.

[Click here to continue
with the story](#)

Dad is already impatiently waiting in the car to give you a ride to school. You kiss mom good-bye and pick up your backpack and sports bag. **WOW**, do they feel heavy.

You wonder whether this time you mistakenly put bricks into your bag instead of swimming trunks and flippers. This early it's a real effort to chuck everything into the trunk.

As usual, you barely make it to the pool on time, schlepping all your gear to the locker room.

Before you hop into the pool and start your twelve lap warm up, you look around and remind yourself how much you actually enjoy the serenity of the morning sun and the clouds being mirrored in the water. As you dive in, the cool water sends an energizing bolt down your spine. How exciting to be back in the pool!

You feel energized, electrified, ready to go. You dive into the pool. The water gently sweeps along your body like rose petals. This is how close mankind can get to being a fish. **OMG**, you just did 150 laps for warm up instead of the normal 12 laps....and all within 10 minutes.

Your friends are looking at you, jaws dropping!

The coach, Mr Cash, is so impressed that he lets you join in on a race against the top swimmers of the school.

8 lanes, 8 contestants, most of them quite a few years older than you- way taller....way stronger. What are the odds that you can even keep up with them?

“Next time, I’ll stay under the radar and stick to 12 laps again” is your last thought before Mr Cash is giving the signal to start.

Beep, excellent start! You’re like a torpedo with only one purpose: SWIM.

It’s over. Not only did you win the race, you broke the school record! You beat the record by 2 minutes.

UN-BE-LIE-VA-BLE !

Everybody is in awe and Mr. Cash shakes your hand. He then does something he has never done before- he

HUGS YOU!

For crying out loud, what have you done to have Mr Cash drop his emotional protective armor and hug you.

Wait, it doesn't end there.

You are called to the principals office for another hug and a POB*. You leave the office with your head up high and a palm-sized medal for outstanding achievement on your chest.

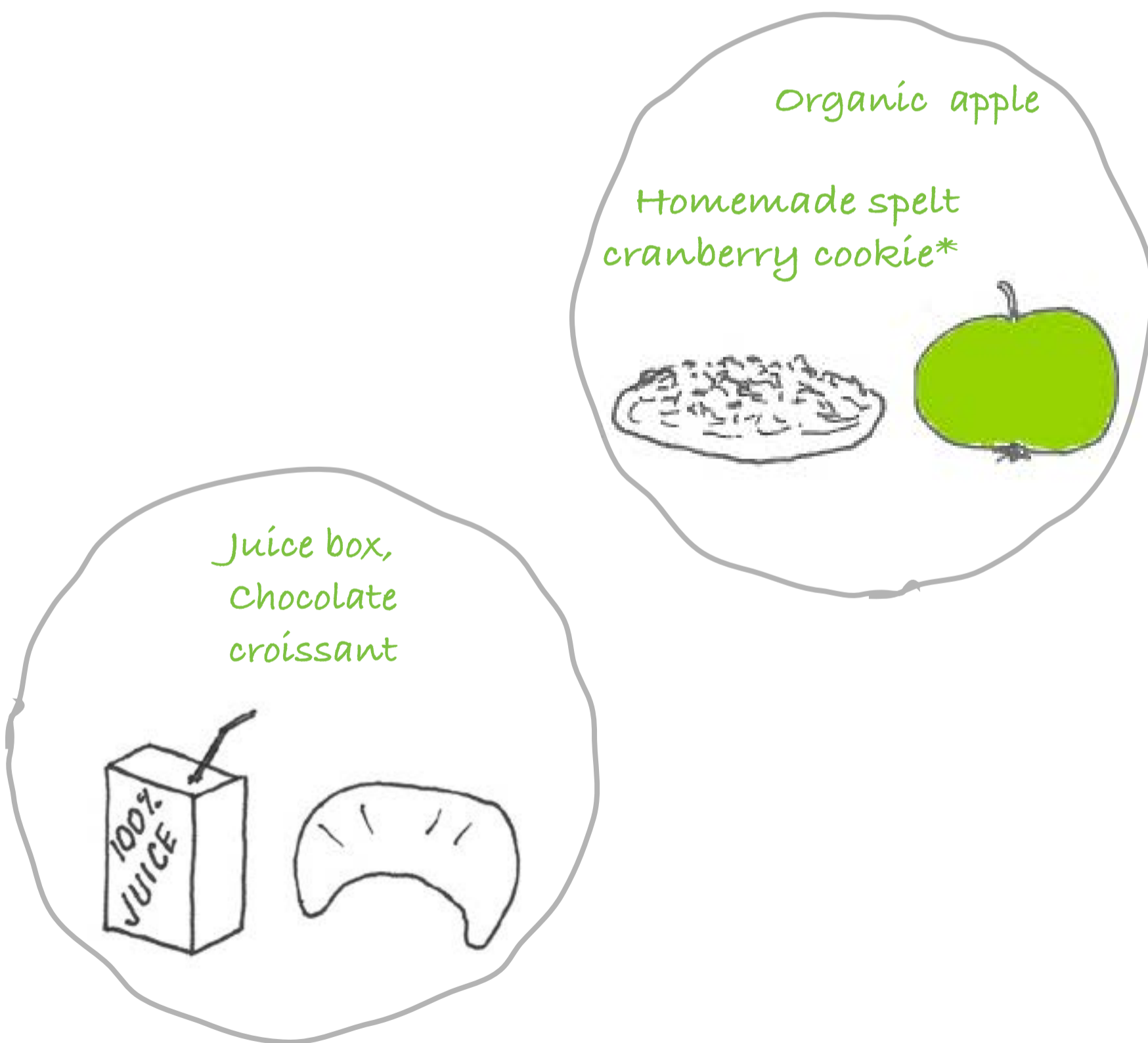
*POB = pad on the back

Morning Snack

The first couple of hours in class are uneventful and soon the bell rings announcing morning snack. Finally, a chance to play and have fun with your friends.

You open your cool camouflage lunch bag.

CLICK on an image to choose what you find inside your lunch bag:



*Made entirely with natural sweeteners, free of refined sugars

Too soon recess is coming to an end. The bell rings and forty minutes of math are waiting for you. Mr. T, your math teacher, announces that your class will be taking an extensive and challenging test today.

“Oh no, not one of Mr. T’s grueling tests again” goes through your mind as the test booklets are being handed out. Inside the booklet there are lots of intimidating looking math problems and you have only 30 minutes to complete the entire test.

You read the first question... Well, not so difficult after all.

Second question... Not too bad either.

This might be not so tricky after all!

As you hit the 5th question the problems are getting more and more difficult and you find it increasingly hard to focus. Your mind starts wandering off to other, more complex problems. Like how to finish your zombie hotel in **MINECRAFT**... Hmm...

You’re trying hard to bring your thoughts back to the test questions. Somewhere in the distance, you hear Mr. T’s voice but find it too hard to concentrate on the questions and his voice at the same time. Somehow, you make it to the last question at the end of the page.

YAY!

Done. Phew... Interestingly, your classmates are all still busy with the test. You don't give it a second thought, put down your pencil and happily doze off into Minecraft world. Just as you are about to figure out how to lure the zombies into your hotel, a loud voice interrupts the peacefulness of your Minecraft world.

"GOOD MORNING, MR/ MISS..., YOU TOO HAVE TO HAND IN YOUR TEST BOOKLET!"

Just as you are about to grab your test booklet, a jolt of panic rushes through your body. Somewhere, hidden deep in your subconsciousness, a word seems to pop up

↳ B A C K P A G E !

No matter how hard you try, you can't make sense of this word.

Unable to put it into context, you're asking your classmate Joe whether the mysterious word **BACK PAGE** rings a bell for him.

When you hear the answer, all blood is draining from your face and your heart literally stops beating for a second. According to Joe, Mr. T announced during the test that everybody should remember to turn over to the back page of the test booklet and answer part B of the test as well.

What? What part B? B as in A and B??

You can't believe that you failed to complete the second half of the assessment.

You will sure enough fail this exam **BIG TIME**. There goes your grade point average down the drain.

Bye- bye. **SNIFF**.

Community college instead of Ivy League school. What a set back.

[Click here to continue
with the story](#)

Too soon recess is over. The bell rings and 60 minutes of math are waiting for you. Mr. T, your math teacher, announces that your class will be taking an extensive test today.

You are saying to yourself: *“Fine with me, I love maths. Bring it on!”*

You open up the test booklet and see that there are 30 questions. Mr. T gives the class 30 minutes to complete the test and sets the timer.

You look at the first question...easy peasy,

Second question... peace of cake

Third question...simple

The neurons in your brain are firing away like crazy. You are nailing one question after the other, your pencil is flying over the page and you are done in three minutes flat!

Incredulously, Mr. T realizes that all your answers are correct. He decides on the spot to give you an additional test from the next higher grade! He points out that you won't be able to finish it all within the given time limit. The new test consists of 50 extremely tricky questions and you have only twenty minutes left.

Gee, what a challenge!!

To your own surprise, your brain is thrilled by this challenge and you finish the test without a single error... and there are still **6** full minutes left on the clock.

Mr. T stares at you in disbelief. He finds himself at a loss for words (which has never happened before). He announces right away that he will establish a new extension math group called “Genius Extension Maths”, covering maths at university level. So far, the only person in the group is...**YOU!**

Lunch

English literacy flies by in a blink of an eye. Soon, the bell announces lunch brake.

You open your lunch bag again- and what do you see on top of your lunch container?

A very (!) embarrassing yellow post-it from mom saying

" I LOVE YOU, HAVE A GREAT DAY ", signed with a red heart.

Your friends are cracking up. Thanks mom...

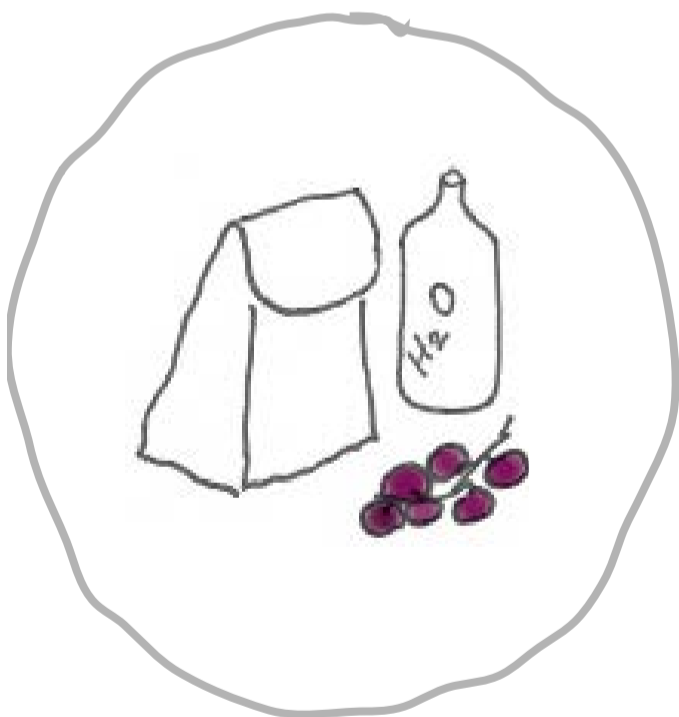
You open your food containers...

CLICK on an image to choose what you are having for lunch:

Bag with potato chips, cheese flavor

White sandwich bread filled
with cheese, ham
and a slice of tomato

Chocolate chip cookie
Juice box



Homemade kale chips

Multi-grain sandwich filled with
hummus, grated carrots, tomato
slices, yellow pepper slices and
lettuce leaves

Two dates for dessert and a handful
of grapes

1 water bottle

Lunch tastes great and the rest of recess is awesome. You play with your friends until the bell rings.

Back in class, the language teacher, Mr. Abeto, announces that there is a statewide school competition for the best essay about Japanese traditions, to be written in Japanese. The author of the best essay gets to fly to Tokyo for a long weekend of sightseeing. Eager to win, everybody gets started right away.

Cheeks are turning red, pencils are racing over the paper and the time passes far too quickly. Understandably, most of the children find it hard to articulate themselves on such a specific topic in this foreign language and are struggling. You are handing in your essay last. It will take another three weeks until the results are announced. What you don't know is that you and another child (who has been raised bilingually in English and Japanese) have impressed the committee so much that both of you are announced winners.

Because you described the **JAPANESE** traditions in such a respectful and colorful way, the **JAPANESE** ambassador himself flies you in a private jet to Tokyo, where a traditional ceremony is prepared in your honor.

The ceremony ends with brilliant fireworks which light up the evening sky of Tokyo and an impressive fly by of their fastest air force jets. Eagerly, you accept an offer to get on one of the planes and get the most thrilling ride of your life.

Zero to 2000 mph in 5 seconds.

WOO HOO !!

The wife of the ambassador decides on the spot to invite you to stay a few weeks at her house so you can get to know everyday life in Japan.

[Click here to continue
with the story](#)

While you're taking your time eating your lunch, you are slowly recuperating from your unspeakable morning experiences. There are only a few minutes left to play outside and you make good use of them. But running around for just a few minutes really wears you out!

Breathing heavily, you drag yourself back into the classroom just in time for the next lesson.

The teacher, Mr. Abeto, enters the classroom right behind you. Hold on a sec- what is Mr. Abeto teaching again? Somehow your memory is blurry. It feels that all of your blood is in your stomach helping you to digest instead of keeping the neurons in your brain firing. You can't think straight. And the teacher's first question hits you by surprise. He is asking you to formulate the simple phrase: *"Hello, my name is ... and I am ... years old. I live in Australia."*

You got this. So easy. And you confidently burst out: *"Holá, me llamo Ben. Soy diez años. Vivo en Australia."*

Well, if that wasn't the smoothest answer ever! But hang on a minute- why is it so quiet all of a sudden?

No one is talking, everybody is staring at you.

Why is Mr. Abeto looking at you in total disbelief?

And why is he slightly shaking his head?

Suddenly, you feel less sure of yourself. Cold sweat is forming on your forehead and your hands start trembling. Mr. Abeto finally speaks up:

"Now, that's very interesting and it would be the most appropriate answer in your Spanish class. However, may I remind you that I am your JAPANESE teacher and this is Japanese 101!!!"

You feel nauseous. Gee, what is going on? Everyone is bursting into hysterical laughter. Someone, drop a bucket of ice water on my head! How can you possibly mix up Spanish class with Japanese class??

You slump down into your chair and are quiet for the rest of the lesson. Mr. Abeto doesn't dare to ask you anything else. But sure enough, at the end of the class, he writes a note to your parents informing them about your utter confusion today and suggesting a medical evaluation. GREAT.

DOES

THIS

DAY

NEVER

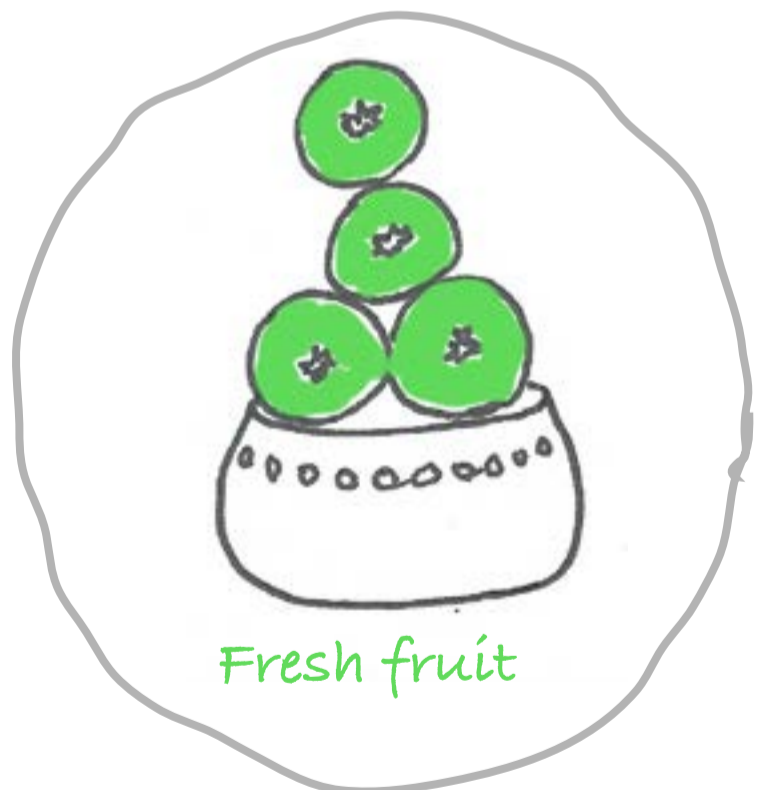
END

???

Afternoon Snack

FINALLY, school is over. Mom is already waiting in the pick up zone. You, your little sister and your mom head home, where a delicious afternoon snack is already waiting for you.

CLICK on an image to choose what your mom has prepared for you:



* One 240ml bottle of guava and jack-fruit flavored vitamin water contains the equivalent of 3 tsp of sugar

As soon as you have finished your afternoon snack, there is a knock at the front door. It's your friend Drew from down the street. He wants to spend a couple of hours playing outside.

You put on your helmet and jump on your bike. Soon, the two of you are surrounded by a bunch of other kids from the neighborhood who are eager to join in.

Everyone agrees to play cops and robbers and only few minutes later you find yourself racing down the street chasing robbers. The fast paced chase continues through parks, small streets, around corners and backyards. The robbers don't even have the slightest chance to escape. Soon, they are surrounded by you and Drew and give up after just eight minutes into the game.

Well done you two!

But the exciting chase took its toll. Your face is burning hot, sweat is dripping down your forehead and you are breathing heavily. Gee, real cops have to be extremely fit if they have to constantly chase bad guys.

You are just about to propose a quiet card game to recover from the exhaustion but before you can open your mouth the group decides to swap teams and play again.

To your utter surprise, none of the other kids seem to be out of breath. You don't want to be a bad sport and within moments, you find yourself racing down the street again with Drew, but this time, it's you whom the other team is chasing.

And they are fast!

Way too fast!

Like, really, how can they still be that fast???

QUICKLY, at the next intersection, you and Drew decide to split up to confuse the cops and make it past the magical number eight in order to beat the other team's time. It seems to be your lucky day, because most of the kids follow Drew.

Maybe even all of them?

Maybe they didn't see you split up?

Which would be too good to be true because you are just basically running out of energy. It seems that the little energy that is left in your body is vanishing rapidly.

All of a sudden, you can make out a faint **SQUEAKING NOISE** that is intensifying quickly. What in the world is that noise? There is only one thing you know that makes a squeaking noise, but can it be? Really? No, that is impossible. It can't be the squeaking **TRICYCLE** of Drew's little sister. You turn around and sure enough, you see two little girls speeding up to you screaming, *"We got him, we got him!" "Oh no, it's the pink Dora squad"*- you and Drew's synonym for your younger sisters Vivian and Tanisha.

Something must be seriously wrong with you if two small girls on pink Dora tricycles are catching up with you so easily. Devastated you give up after just six minutes.

Drew cannot believe that your little sisters were the ones who caught you and gets quite annoyed that he lost the game because of you. It takes you a while to reassure him that you didn't slow down on purpose.

As you slowly push your bike back home, totally worn out by the afternoon's events, you realize that all you want is to stretch out on the cozy **COUCH** in the living room with a bag of chips and doze off...

[Click here to continue
with the story](#)

As soon as you have finished your afternoon snack, there is a knock at the front door. It's your friend, Drew, from down the street. He wants to spend a couple of hours playing outside. You put on your helmet and jump on your bike. Soon, you and Drew are surrounded by a bunch of other kids from the neighborhood who are eager to join in. Everyone agrees to play cops and robbers and only few minutes later you find yourself racing down the street chasing robbers. The fast paced chase continues through parks, small streets, around corners and backyards. The robbers don't even have the slightest chance to escape. Soon, they are surrounded by you and Drew and give up after just eight minutes into the game. Well done you two!

Some of the kids are already panting heavily from racing around and a couple of them suggest a quiet game of cards. However, the majority of kids rule in favor of another round of cops and robbers and soon you find yourself and Drew speeding down the street on your bikes again. This time you are being chased by the cops, who are trying to find you in less than eight minutes to win the game.

A few minutes into the chase, you notice an unfamiliar noise. It sounds like a crowd of cheering people. You and Drew have to see what is going on and you follow the noise. A few blocks down the road you see that the street is blocked off and people are lining the street. What are they cheering for? You and Drew squeeze past a few people and see bikes flying by. How could you have forgotten. Billboards have been all over town for the past weeks. It's the weekend of the famous biannual interstate bike race. You can see the starting line where teenagers in colorful jerseys are getting ready for their race. HMM... Maybe you should race them, just for the fun of it?

You sneak up from behind and position yourself among other riders. There's the starting signal and everybody speeds off. **WOW**, this is fun... You speed up and spot a guy in a purple jersey who is in the lead. You focus on the purple color, saying to yourself not to lose sight of it. The race is super fast but you are unstoppable. After a few minutes, the purple jersey and you are the only ones in sight; the peloton* with the other riders has fallen behind.

* The main field or group of cyclists in a race

The purple jersey guy seems to be in great shape, but so are you... HAH!

You start wondering whether you could pass him. You gather all your energy and just break away. You keep pedaling hard and can hear the crowd cheering you on. More adrenaline is rushing through your body.

The finishing line is coming into sight and you push even harder. What if the purple jersey will pass you on the last few meters?

You glance back over your shoulder. There's no one in sight, not even the faintest hint of purple. As soon as you cross the finish line, flashes go off, people are running towards you and cameras are zooming in on you. A reporter is holding up a microphone to your face and is asking

"How do you feel after having just won the biannual interstate junior race? Which team are you racing for?"

Breathing heavily, you explain that you just joined in for the fun of it. The people can hardly believe it and your interview hits the news the same evening.

The judges decide that the title will be given to the guy in the purple jersey who came in second because you were not registered for the race. But your performance was so outstanding that you get to stand on the podium and receive a huge golden trophy.

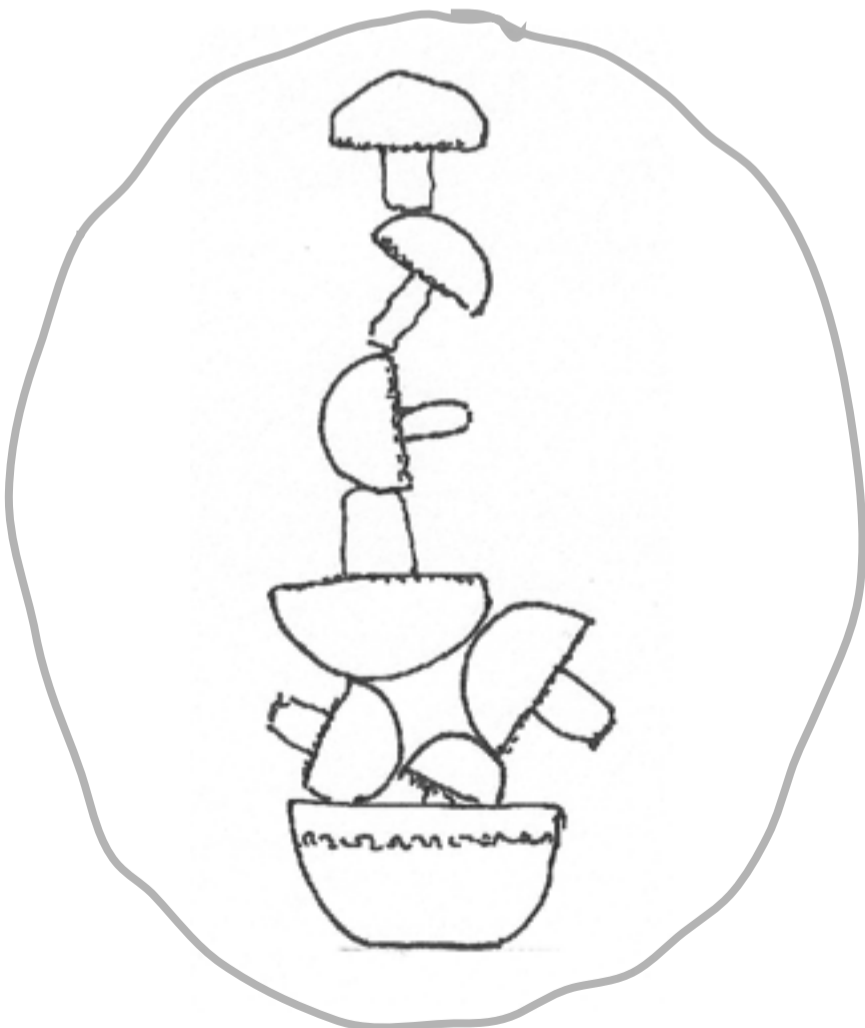
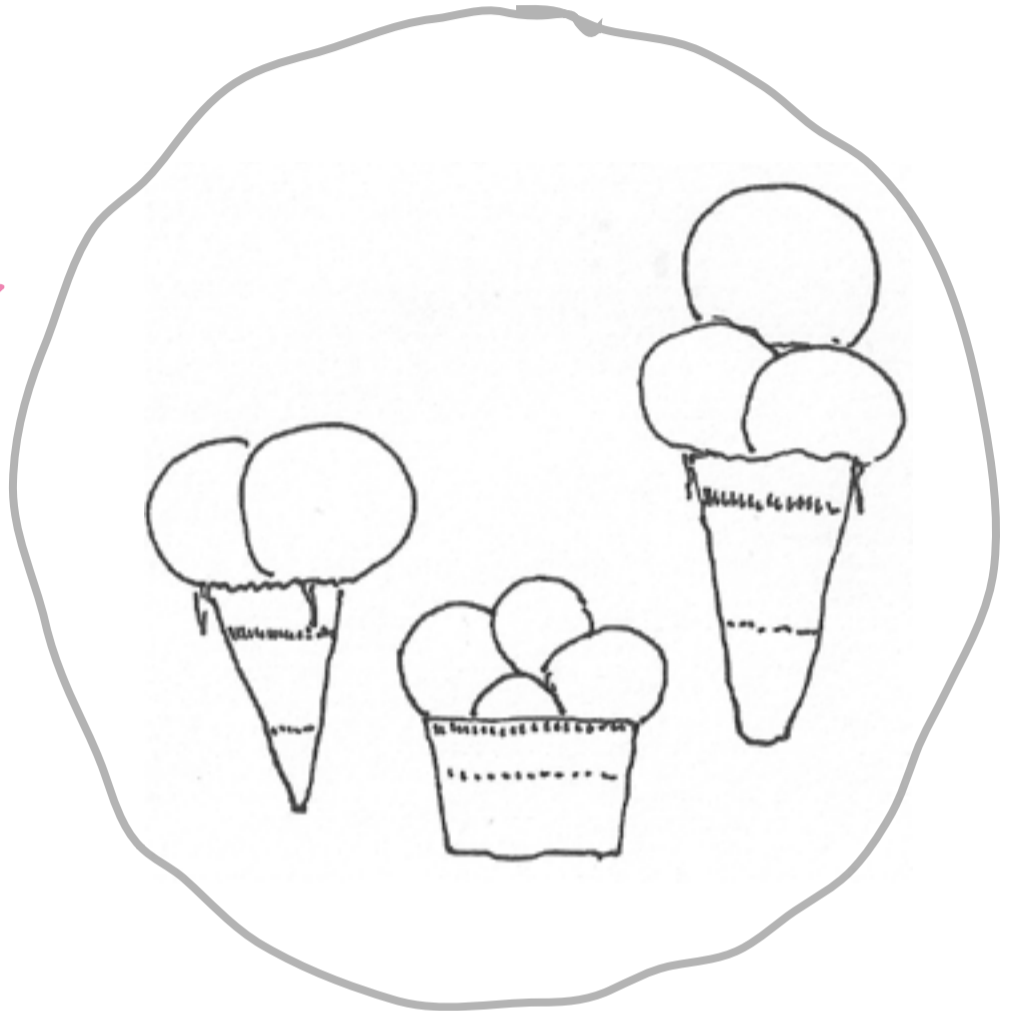
Pretty overwhelmed by what just happened, you make your way back to your neighborhood, where the cops are still looking for you and Drew.

When they spot your **TROPHY**, you have a lot of explaining to do.

FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS, YOU CHOOSE:

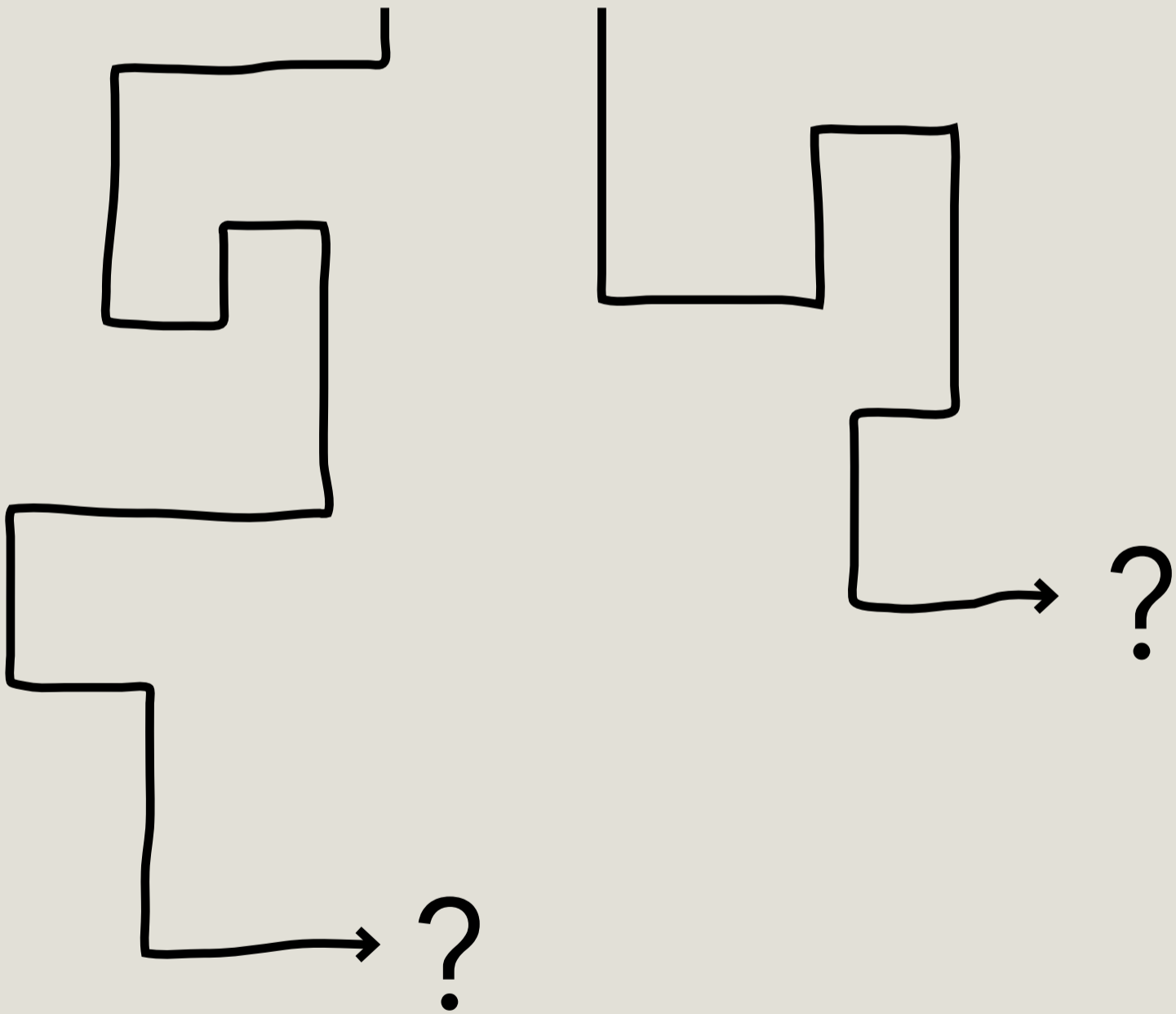
(By clicking on an image)

CHIPS over salad,
ICE CREAM over fruits,
STEAKS over vegetables
and
SOFT DRINKS over water



SALAD over chips,
FRUITS over ice cream,
VEGETABLES over steaks
and
WATER over soft drinks

30 years later...



The day at work was just another day, another long day that never seemed to end. Finally, you're making your way home through heavy traffic and arrive at your apartment building to find out that the aged elevator is ---once again--- not working.

GREAT!

How can it brake down every other week? People fly into space and have developed all kinds of computers and devices but they don't seem to be able to provide us with elevators that work!!

You huff and puff up the seven stairs to the first floor where your apartment is located and almost collapse in front of the door. Searching for the door keys in your pocket gives you some time to catch your breath.

Once inside, you simply drop your stuff in the hallway, grab your favorite bag of chips you have conveniently placed on the counter top the night before and a can of cold soda and head for your final destination, your beloved couch. There we go. Slump. **PHEW.**

The sugar in the soda gives you new energy and you are able to lift the remote and turn on the TV.

There is a documentary on healthy foods on the food channel. Out of laziness, you stick with the program.

You are surprised that the food actually doesn't look too bad, while stuffing more hamburger flavored chips into your mouth. The lean and healthy looking couple on TV are explaining the benefits of plant-based foods and are preparing a dish which looks just mouth watering.

PEEP, PEEP!

The alarm on your watch reminds you to take your daily cocktail of prescription pills. You swallow a few different sized and different colored pills with a large sip of soda. You don't really remember what each one of these pills does. You believe that the red pill is to lower--- what was that again?--- Your high blood sugar level? Or high cholesterol? Or your blood pressure?

Anyway, your eyelids are getting very heavy. The evening sun shining through the window is still very bright and you can hear people outside enjoying the late summer afternoon. You would love to go for a walk. Just not now.

Your very last thought before you doze off are:

“One of these days I will change my life, I have to ...

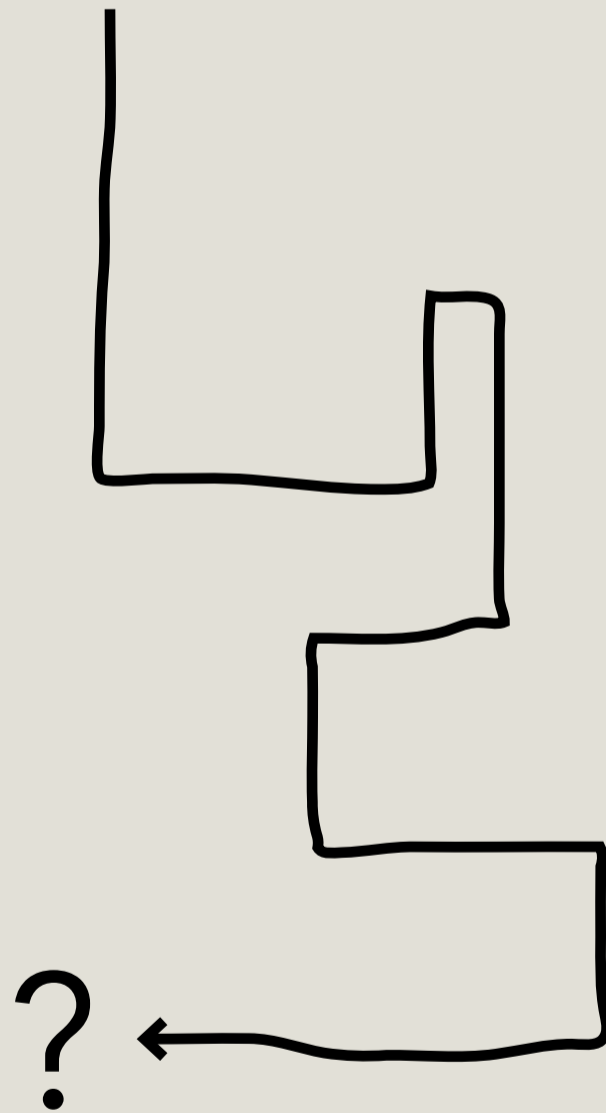
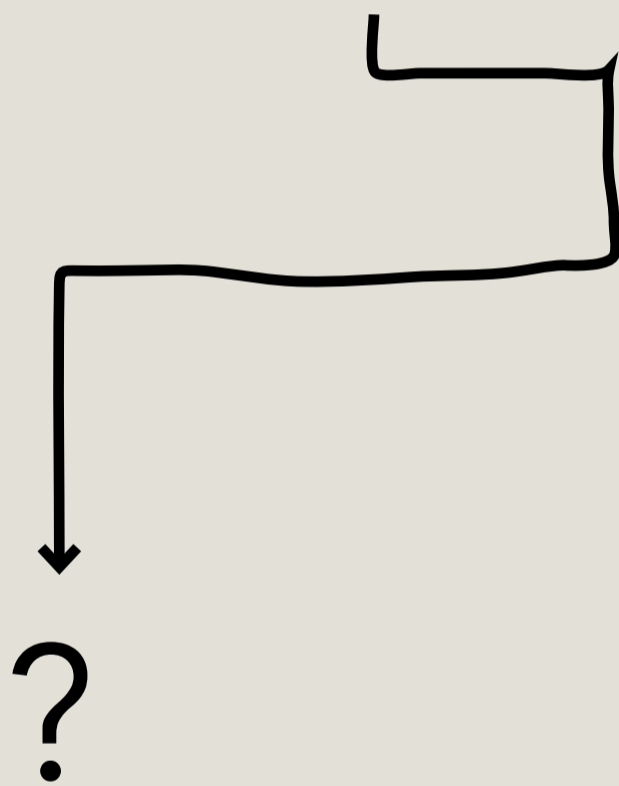
JUST

NOT

TODAY”.

The End.

30 years later...



You just got back from an epic 20k run and feel totally exhilarated. Fastest run ever and your pulse always stayed within the optimal zone. This run is part of your physical training to prepare for your space mission next month. All required blood tests and physical checks reflect your state of excellence, physically and mentally.

In space, you will be in charge of the installation of the world's first atmospheric air purifying system. This unique invention, which you have developed together with your research team, has gotten you the latest Nobel Prize for the most innovative environmental innovation of the century.

Just as you are stepping out of the refreshing shower, a **SKYPE** call is coming in. One of the international members of your science team that is testing your latest innovation in the lab needs some advice. This particular piece of research is also a very exciting project which is extremely important to you- it entails the concept of how to construct novel organic gardens. Not just simple organic gardens. **FLYING** organic gardens! It has taken you years to find a way to provide organic food to everyone on earth and you finally had your breakthrough.

Since childhood, you have been lucky enough to have had access to the healthiest plant-based organic foods and it has always been your focus to ensure that every person on earth will have access to healthy, organic plant foods.

Following the **SKYPE** call, you make yourself a post workout superfood smoothie and start working on your laptop. You are jotting down notes for a speech, which you will be giving to a huge audience of students at MIT*. You want to inspire the young audience by talking about how a single person can make all the difference in this world and how individuals change the world with the choices they make every single day.

You take a short break and gaze around your home office. Your eyes get stuck on the badge you got as a kid for setting the school swimming record... And a photograph of you at the start of the genius' math group.

What an amazing life you have had so far... And there is still so much to explore and a fountain of ideas in your head...

*MIT= world famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Life is truly

great

and

you

don't

want

to

waste

a

single

second!

The End.



Isabella Richter has switched to a whole-food plant-based lifestyle more than 13 years ago. My Daily/ Crazy Food Maze is an interactive children's book that highlights the impact food has on our everyday lives in a fun and entertaining way.

Isabella has a medical background and promotes a scientific, evidence based healthy lifestyle.

With this book, Isabella wants to promote a positive attitude towards healthy foods among children and realize the power nutritious foods provide.

Over the years, Isabella has accumulated extensive knowledge particularly on the proper preparation of ingredients as well as gut health and has become an expert in helping people transition into a whole-food plant-based lifestyle.

Isabella is an artist, writer, physician and orthodontist

Her work is featured on

www.TheReconnectProgram.com

www.isabellarichter.com