The Best Milk of My Life

Strange things occur in kindergarten. If you want some evidence about that, I’ll just go ahead and tell you a story. Two of my best friends had a crush on the same girl and they would get into fights every single day to see who would get her. During that whole year, they hated each other, and this put me in an awkward situation, since I was friends with both of them. Thirteen years later, they ended up walking together for graduation. Now getting back into topic, my point is, absolutely anything can happen in kindergarten, and it is all just a bunch of kid nonsense. I have a story of my own.

I was new in kindergarten. I felt like such a grown up boy. Our teacher would actually let us use glitter and glue and tape, and even paint on our own! Do you get my excitement? Apparently, three and four year olds were too young to handle these toys and would end up making a mess in every single corner of the room. This was different, we were not three or four, we were old, mature, and responsible.

Now, before going on with my story, let me give you a little background information about milk in Peru. First of all, it’s definitely not as good as the milk from the States. It’s awfully creamy, even so, that the zero percent fat milk feels more like an eighty percent fat milk. Second of all, milk comes in a box. How boring is that. We don’t get those giant gallon jugs you can chug in a couple seconds or even use for weight lifting. Think about the chugging for a moment. Carton boxes aren’t stiff, which means you can’t hold them up for too long before your fingertips poke holes into them. And the aperture is this little hole with a cheap looking plastic cap that won’t even close after the fifth time it’s used. So this is pretty much what happens if you decide to chug a liter carton box of milk. You stare at it, deep into its eyes, as it looks back at you with fury, as if scratching out all of your deepest and darkest secrets. In self-defense, you violently fling your arm toward it, and snatch it with demanding authority. The lid opens up with just a flick from your pinky, the box goes up, and speedily dashes towards your lips. All of a sudden, you taste a drop of milk with the tip of your tongue, not noticing that outside your mouth, the carton box melts into your hands and milk is spilled all over your face, as the carton box of milk is crushed between your soft and tender fingers . So as you see, not only is the milk creamy and miserable, but you can’t even chug it properly while your mom is not looking. But enough about milk, it’s time to talk about paper mache.

I clearly remember it, the stacks of newspaper seemed to form this chain of mountains across the classroom. If you’ve never seen the Peruvian Andres before, you should, because this looked exactly like them. Or if you prefer, giant Alps formed in front of my eyes. I was stupefied at its magnificence. Now put yourself in my shoes, you’re five years old, you’re sitting on a chair, arms folded and mouth shut. And right in front of you, the newspaper mountains, balloons, scissors, tape, glue, paint, and candy! All a five year old could ever desire; this was paradise. And yet, I was still on my chair, arms folded and mouth shut. How could I possibly contain myself; how would you contain yourself?

An urgent desire arouse within my body, like a fervent passion to dive into these Alps. My watery mouth could taste the excitement. My eagerness to jump forward was as a wild chimpanzee hollering, squealing and banging those metal bars in his cage to become free. I had to move forward, I had to stand up, I had to let lose this beast inside me. But I didn’t, I couldn’t. Or at least not yet.

People tend to say that the teenagers are the most rebel group of individuals. I even read once that they are a “uniquely human phenomenon”. In an article about Parenting Teens, Christina Botto explains, “Your teen wants to have some input about his life and to be allowed to make some decisions”. This was happening to me, yet, I was not a teen. Do you see the pattern? Regardless of my strong desire to get up and disobey my teacher, I was just a five year old, not a teenager, I couldn’t rebel against a command. Just as some may call teenagers a “uniquely human phenomenon”, I’m sure I would’ve been just that same thing to them.

The moment arrived, our teacher gave us a go, and as a tamped of vicious buffalo, we demolished the Alps that stood in front of our eyes.

The entire view seemed to fade. I could barely see my classmates climbing over each other as the teachers tried to pick them one by one to create some order. This dark veil created a tunnel between them and me, and I seemed to be spacing out of the action, floating away from these Alps, and moving toward this white objects on the edge of a table. I regained my sight once again, but just for this curious image. I slid my feet gently toward the table, trying to pass unnoticed by the crowd. As I got closer to these curious objects, my hearing became blurred and a complete silence finally overcame me. As a dog sniffing a stranger, I glanced at the objects, poked them with one finger, then another, until I laid my palm around it, pressed against its smooth and soft shape, and brought it close to my eyes.

What was this? It looked familiar.

A cow, a plastic bottle, and a brilliant white as clear as my brother’s teeth. Could it possibly be milk? Milk? Milk in a plastic bottle? My mind struggled for denial. Peruvian milk comes in carton box. This was outrageous, who would invent such a thing! Without further meditation, I had an epiphany, or more likely, a logic conclusion. This was an American School, this had to be American milk!

It was an unfamiliar taste, a gooey texture, sticky at times, and it was very thick. And the addicting smell lifted me to the clouds. I danced and pranced and sung and spun and felt this couple of seconds as an everlasting life. I loved it, and I chugged it, and I knew my mom wasn’t watching, and neither was my teacher.

Soon after that incident, I learned what a bottle of Elmer’s Glue looked like.