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## Muffin Macguffin

by Sue Hitchcock

“Can I make a cake, Mum?”

“Of course! You should say, ‘may I’. We all know you can do it.”

Anna at ten years old was bored and frustrated by her Primary School. We had decided on a bog-standard state primary school rather than the closer Church of England school because it seemed more relaxed. She was a contrary child, always keen to pursue her own path and now she was subjected to sitting at a desk all day.

She had become more than chubby and never got picked for lead parts in plays, even though, with perfect pitch, she sang like an angel. Now it was her last year at Campsbourne Primary and a ray of light came into her life in the form of a young teacher, Mr Wright, who had spotted her hands-on ability in the simple science experiments he taught in class.

The cake smelled wonderful, sweet and spicy, but the next day no cake appeared.

“What happened to the cake, Anna? I was looking forward to it.”

“It’s not for us.”

“Oh?”

“No, I made it for Mr Wright. It’s his birthday next week.”

“What kind of cake is it? Won’t it be stale by then?”

“Well, I’m going to play a trick on him, to make him laugh. It’s got curry powder in the middle.”

“Curry powder? That’s not very nice. You’ll have to make another cake the day before his birthday, but let’s have a taste.”

Anna brought in the cake tin and opened it. We peered in and it looked delicious, till we cut it open. The middle was yellow and speckled with spice. The taste was, well, the kind you spit out.

The evening before Mr Wright’s birthday, showing the talented woman she was to become, Anna baked a delicious cake, flavoured with vanilla instead of curry and showed her appreciation of the kindness of her teacher in a way he would like better. Who knows what she might have become, if he had not inspired her. She studied Sport Science and used nutrition and physiology in her final thesis.