



Granny's Fabulous Kitchen

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LET'S BEGIN

Below is given a list of various foods. Choose the one(s) you like the most and with a partner discuss what is special about the food(s) you like.

Dal	Biryani	Pulao
Fried rice	Kabab	Plain rice
Gushtaba	Chicken	Yakhni

Whenever Granny made vanilla or chocolate fudge, she gave me some to take to Mohan, the gardener's son.

It was no use taking him roast duck or curried chicken, because in his house no one ate meat. But Mohan liked sweets – gulab jamun, rasgullas, jalebies which were made with lots of milk and lots of sugar, as well as Granny's homemade English sweets.

We would climb onto the branches of the jack-fruit tree and eat fudge of peppermints or sticky toffee. We couldn't eat the jack-fruit, except when it was cooked as a vegetable or made into a pickle. But the tree itself was wonderful for climbing. And some wonderful creatures lived in it – squirrels and fruit bats and a pair of green parrots. The squirrels were friendly and soon got into the habit of eating from our hands. They too were fond of Granny's chocolate fudge. One young squirrel would even explore my pockets to see if I was keeping anything from him.

* **Note:** 'Lots' is used with uncountable nouns, 'a lot of' used with countable nouns





Mohan and I could climb almost any tree in the garden, and if Granny was looking for us, she'd call from the front verandah and then from the pantry at the side of the house and finally from her bathroom window on the other side of the house. There were trees on all sides, and it was impossible to tell which one we were in, until we answered her call. Sometimes Crazy would give us away, by barking beneath our tree.



When there was fruit to be picked, Mohan did the picking. The mangoes and lichees came into season during summer, when I was away at boarding school, so I couldn't help with the fruit gathering. The papayas were in season during winter, but you don't climb on the papaya trees – they are too slender and wobbly. You knock the papayas down with a long pole, and catch them before they hit the earth.

Mohan also helped Granny with the pickling. She was justly famous for her pickles. Green mangoes pickled in oil were always popular. So was her hot lime pickle. And she was equally good at pickling turnips, carrots, cauliflowers, chillies, and other fruits and vegetables. She could pickle almost anything, from nasturtium seed to jack-fruit. Uncle Ken didn't care for pickles, so I was always urging Granny to make more of them.

My own preference was sweet chutneys and sauces, but I ate pickles too, even the very hot ones.

One winter, when Granny's funds were low, Mohan and I went from house to house, selling pickles for her.

In spite of all the people and pets she fed, Granny wasn't rich. The house



had come to her from Grandfather, but there wasn't much money in the bank. The mango crop brought in a fair amount every year, and there was a small pension from the Railways (Grandfather had been one of the pioneers who'd helped bring the railway line to Dehra at the turn of the century) but there was no other income. And now that I come to think of it, all those wonderful meals consisted of only one course, followed by a sweet dish. It was Granny's cooking that turned a modest meal into a feast.

I wasn't ashamed to sell pickles for Granny. It was great fun. Mohan and I armed ourselves with baskets filled with pickle bottles, then set off to cover houses in our area.

Major Clarke, across the road, was our first customer. He had red hair and bright blue eyes and was almost always good-humoured.

“And what have you got there, Rusty?” he asked.

“Pickles, sir.”

“Pickles! Have you been making them?”

“No, sir, they're my grandmother's. We're selling them, so we can buy a turkey for Christmas.”

“Mrs. Bond's pickles, eh? Well, I'm glad mine is the first house on your way, because I'm sure that basket will soon be empty. There's no one who can make a pickle like your grandmother, son. I've said it before and I'll say it again, she's God's gift to a world that's terribly short of good cooks. My wife's gone shopping, so I can talk quite freely, you see. . . . What have you got this time? Stuffed chillies, I trust. She knows they're my favourite. I shall be deeply wounded if there are no stuffed chillies in that basket.”

There were, in fact, three bottles of stuffed red chillies in the basket, and Major Clarke took all of them.

Our next call was at Miss Kellner's house. Miss Kellner couldn't eat hot food, so it was no use offering her pickles. But she bought a bottle of preserved



ginger. And she gave me a little prayer-book. Whenever I went to see her, she gave me a prayer-book, and it was always the same.

Further down the road, Dr Dutt, who was in charge of the hospital, bought several bottles of lime pickle, saying it was good for his liver. And Mr Hari, who owned a garage at the end of the road and sold all the latest cars, bought two bottles of pickled onions and begged us to bring him another two the following month.

By the time we got home, the basket would usually be empty, and Granny richer by twenty or thirty rupees – enough, in those days, for a turkey.

Uncle Ken stayed for Christmas and ate most of the turkey.

“It’s high time you found a job,” said Granny to Uncle Ken one day. “There are no jobs in Dehra,” complained Uncle Ken.

“How can you tell? You’ve never looked for one. And anyway, you don’t have to stay here forever. Your sister Emily is headmaster of a school in Lucknow. You could go to her. She said before that she was ready to put you in charge of the dormitory.”

“Bah!” said Uncle Ken. “Honestly, Aunt May, you don’t expect me to look after a dormitory seething with forty or fifty demented small boys?”

“What’s demented?” I asked.

“Shut up,” said Uncle Ken.

“It means crazy,” said Granny.

“So many words mean crazy,” I complained. “Why don’t we just say crazy? We’ve a crazy dog, and now Uncle Ken’s crazy too.”

Uncle Ken clipped me over the ear, and Granny said, “Your Uncle isn’t crazy, so don’t be disrespectful. He’s just lazy.”

“And eccentric,” I said. “I heard he was eccentric.”

“Who said I was eccentric?” demanded Uncle Ken.



“Miss Leslie,” I lied. I knew Uncle Ken was fond of Miss Leslie, who ran a beauty parlour in Dehra’s smart shopping centre.

“I don’t believe you,” said Uncle Ken. “Anyway, when did you see Miss Leslie?”

“We sold her some mint chutney last week. I told her you liked mint chutney. But she said she’d bought it for Mr Houghton who’s taking her to the picture tomorrow.”

(Ruskin Bond)

Glossary

<i>fudge:</i>	a soft sweet made from sugar, butter and milk which often has flavour added to it
<i>squirrel:</i>	a small furry animal with a long tail which climbs trees and feeds on nuts and seeds
<i>nasturtium:</i>	a plant with yellow, red or orange flowers and round leaves
<i>pantry:</i>	a small room or large cupboard in a house where food is kept
<i>stuffed:</i>	filled
<i>eccentric:</i>	strange or unusual, sometimes in an amusing way
<i>seething:</i>	crowded
<i>dormitory:</i>	sleeping room with many beds

THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT

I. Answer these questions:

1. Granny would send some fudge to Mohan. Why wouldn’t she send meat?
2. Besides Rusty and Mohan who was fond of Granny’s fudge?



3. You can't climb a papaya tree. Why? How can you bring the papayas down?
4. What would Granny do to earn money? Who helped her in her trade?
5. What would Granny buy with the money that Rusty and Mohan earned for her? Who took a good share of the meal in Granny's kitchen?
6. What were Major Clarke's views about Granny and her pickles?
7. What advice did Granny give to Uncle Ken? What did he say in reply?
8. Why did Rusty lie about Miss Leslie? Why did he mention Mr Houghton?

II. Say whether the statements are true or false. Write T or F in the boxes.

1. Granny was an expert in making English sweets.
2. Mohan worked in Granny's kitchen.
3. Uncle Ken liked Granny's pickles.
4. Mohan and Rusty always sold Granny's pickles in the market.
5. Granny bought her house after the death of her husband.
6. Rusty's grandfather was an employee in the Railways.
7. Major Clarke bought four bottles of pickle.
8. Dr Dutt found lime pickle good for liver.
9. Miss Leslie is the wife of Uncle Ken.
10. Miss Leslie had really bought chutney from Rusty.

LANGUAGE WORK

- I. Guess the meanings of the underlined words in the following sentences. These meaning will be different from the ones you have learned in the story.



1. There was a knock at the door and we were all frightened.
2. This library houses hundreds of old manuscripts.
3. She's been really down since her husband died.
4. Return the jacket. It's not made of a good stuff.
5. He was charged with stealing a pair of trousers.

II. Match words in Column A with their opposites in Column B.

A	B
hard	sour
sell	rich
small	soft
sweet	buy
front	big
live	back
poor	die

- ## III. Many fruits and vegetables are mentioned in the story. Write them in your notebook. With a partner discuss whether any or all of them are found in your place.

GRAMMAR WORK

- I. Study the underlined words in the following:

- The papayas were in season during winter.
- Green mangoes pickled in oil were always popular. So was her hot lime pickle.

‘Were’ and ‘was’ are verbs which have been used with plural and singular subjects, respectively – ‘The papayas’ is plural and ‘hot lime pickle’ is singular.

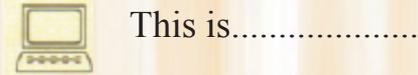
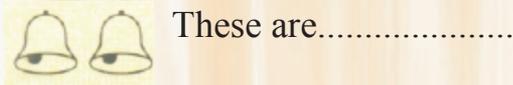
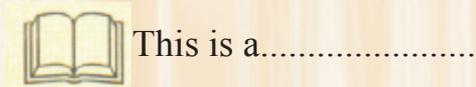
It is important that subject and verb should agree with each other in a sentence.



Study these examples also:

- Dogs **bark.** ~ A dog **barks.**
- Children **are playing** ~ The child **is weeping.**
- Teachers **have come** ~ The teacher **has gone** to her class.

Now look at the following pictures and write how many of them there are.
Use: “There is a...” or, “There are...” in the picture.



II. Use contracted forms for the underlined expressions in the following sentences:

1. Rusty was not ashamed of selling Granny’s pickles.
2. Uncle Ken did not care for pickles.
3. No, sir, they are my grandmother’s.
4. I have said it before and I will say it again.
5. It is high time you found a job.
6. What is demented?
7. We have a crazy dog and now Uncle Ken is crazy too.
8. I do not know who killed the bird. It is really bad.
9. She will be with us for the whole month.