


*Charlie
and the
Catastrophic Cookies*

Written by **Emma Marrelli**

For Charlie, my fun and loving dog who passed away last year. And for my kind and intelligent nephew Beau, who I love more than anything in the world.

We all make mistakes sometimes. It's okay. Just try your best to not make the same mistake twice. - E.M.



It was a sunny day in early spring, and Charlie could finally feel the warmth of the sun gazing through the kitchen window for the first time this year.

Charlie sat at the table basking in the sunshine, slowly biting into his peanut butter and jelly toast.

Suddenly, Charlie's mother hollered, "CHARLIEEE, hurry up and eat your breakfast! It's too beautiful of a day to not go for a stroll into town."



Charlie's mother startled him so much that he accidentally threw his toast in the air, and then **SPLAT!** The toast landed face down on the kitchen floor.

"Oh Charlie," his mother giggled. "That's alright. Let's go down to the bakery and get you something fresh and delicious," she suggested.

As Charlie and his mother walked into town, the two walked straight towards the town's famous bakery. SNIFF SNIFF! Charlie knew they were getting close because all he could smell and all he could think about was the sweetness of the fresh bread and baked treats wafting in his direction.





Once they arrived at the bakery, Charlie's eyes became ten times wider as he peered into the glass display of all the baked treats.

"YUMMY!" said Charlie.

The bakery was a carb-lover's dream - sourdough bread rose to perfection, ten different kinds of cookies, golden croissants, various loaves, assorted bars and tarts, and a rainbow of macarons.

Although Charlie wanted to try one of everything from the bakery, he knew he could only pick one treat. After thinking long and hard about what he would like to choose, his final decision was the croissant with jam.

"Great choice," the baker replied.



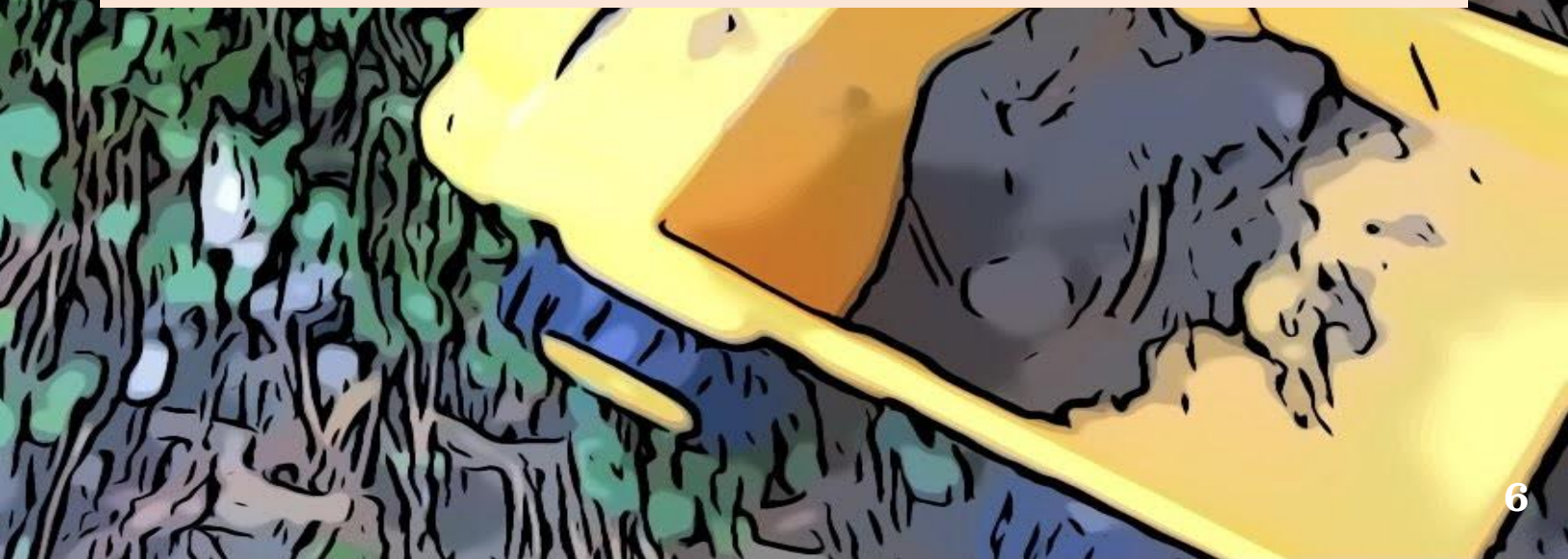
After Charlie finished his croissant, he and his mother continued on their walk, enjoying the sunshine and the sound of the birds chirping. Charlie's mother was talking about all kinds of things...school, what she was planning to plant in her garden this year, and what spring cleaning she needed to tackle. But all Charlie could think about were those freshly baked cookies.

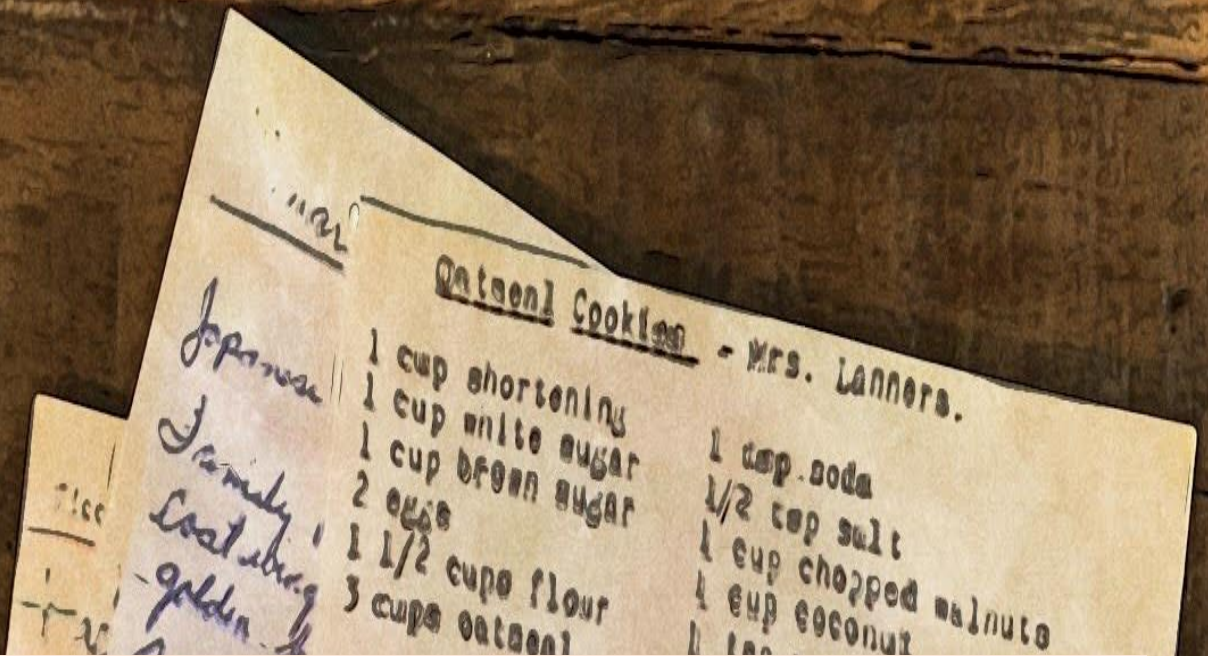


When Charlie and his mother arrived back home from their morning stroll, Charlie asked his mother if they could bake cookies.

Charlie's mother said, "I suppose we could, but you must wait until I finish my gardening. I'll be about an hour, so play for a while until I'm done, and then we'll make them together."

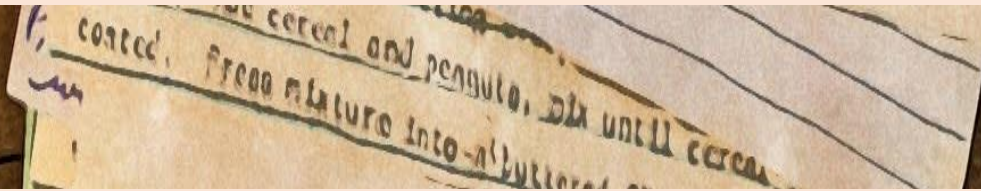
Charlie let out a big sigh and responded, "Okay...fine."





As his mother headed outside towards the garden, Charlie sat inside trying to think of things to do, but all he could about was how badly he wanted to make chocolate chip cookies. “Tick-Tock...Tick-Tock,” the clock sounded as Charlie watched it slowly tick by.

Charlie couldn’t wait any longer and decided he would show his mother that he could make cookies all by himself.



Charlie peeked out the window to see his mother preoccupied by her gardening and then grabbed a step stool to reach the recipe bin. As Charlie flipped through the recipes, he finally found the one he was looking for.

“This looks easy as pie!” thought Charlie.



Next, Charlie went into the refrigerator and reached on his tippy toes for the ingredients he needed. Charlie didn't quite know what all the ingredients were, but he had seen his mother make these cookies before and was sure he grabbed everything she used.

All Charlie could think about was how proud his mother would be of him once he was done.



Charlie began putting all of the ingredients into a bowl. “½ of vanilla?” Charlie questioned. “That must mean half of the bottle!” he concluded.

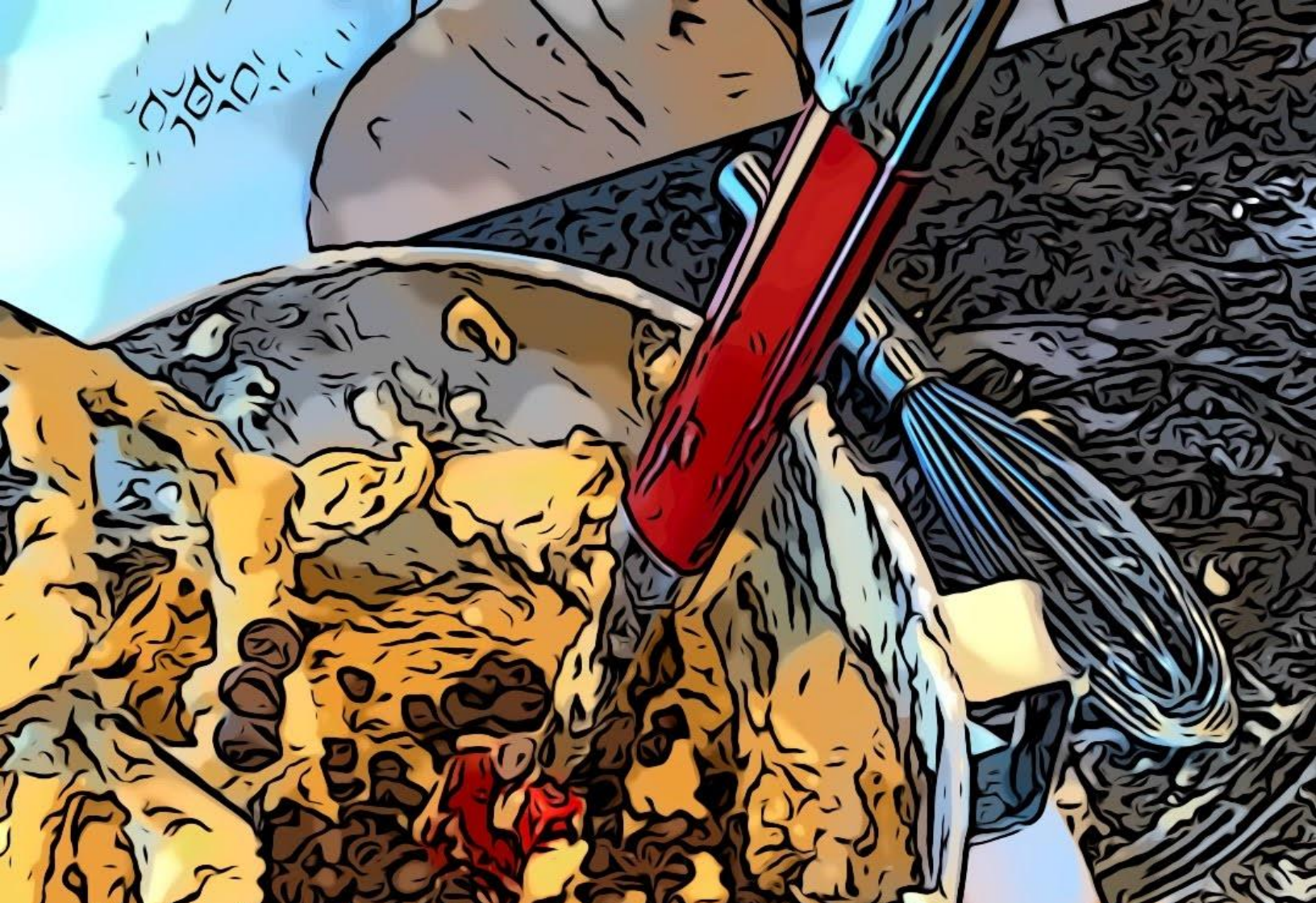
Charlie poured half the bottle of vanilla in the bowl, cracked the eggs but didn't see the eggshell pieces fall through his hands, put in 1 stick of butter not realizing the recipe called for 1 cup, and lost count of how many spoonfuls of baking powder he put in, so he put in a couple extra just in case.



Charlie went to mix all of the ingredients with a whisk, and POOF!
The mixture went EVERYWHERE.


“Oh no!” said Charlie.





Charlie tried to scoop up the mess, but he just made it worse. Since the whisk wasn't working, Charlie mixed the remainder of mixture in the bowl with his hands and then rolled the chunky dough into little balls and put them on a baking sheet.

The recipe said to "preheat the oven", so Charlie pressed the upwards arrow on the stove until the screen read 3:50, just like the recipe said. Charlie didn't realize that he set the timer to 3 minutes and 50 seconds, instead of setting the oven temperature to 350 degrees. Charlie slid the cookies into the oven and figured he would sit and watch them until they looked baked.



As Charlie stood in front of the oven and watched the cookies not baking, his mother walked back into the house to see the disaster that Charlie had made in the kitchen.

“CHARLIE! What happened?!” asked his mother in shock.


“I’m sorry mamma. I just wanted to show you that I could do it all by myself, but I made a mistake,” said Charlie, as tears welled up in his eyes.



“Oh Charlie. I understand your intentions were good, but doing things on your own when I asked you to wait for me could have caused an accident,” explained his mother.

“I know that now momma, and I will always wait for directions before trying something new on my own,” responded Charlie.

Charlie’s mother hugged him and told him, “It’s ok if mistakes happen, we just need to learn from them so that they don’t happen twice. Let me go clean myself off, and then we can clean up this mess together and restart the cookies together!”



Together, Charlie and his mother preheated the oven first, measured out the ingredients, made sure that no eggshells made their way into the dough, set the timer, and watched the chewy, gooey, chocolate chip cookies rise.

After the cookies finished cooling, Charlie and his mother went outside and sat under the pergola. The two celebrated their teamwork over cookies and a glass of milk and watched the spring sun set in the distance.





Emma Marrelli is from Kamloops, B.C., and is an aspiring elementary school teacher who loves children's books. Emma is a daughter, sister, and aunt, and enjoys spending time with family and friends, baking, exploring, and sipping coffee.

