Kari Yates

Eat Your Broccoli

When I was a child, my family called me “a picky eater.”

It was true.

I didn’t really like any kind of meat (except hotdogs and fried chicken legs). I didn’t really like any kind of vegetables (except corn). And I was always on the lookout for foods - like peppers and mushrooms and onion and coconut and nuts and tomatoes - that grownups try to hide inside of other foods.

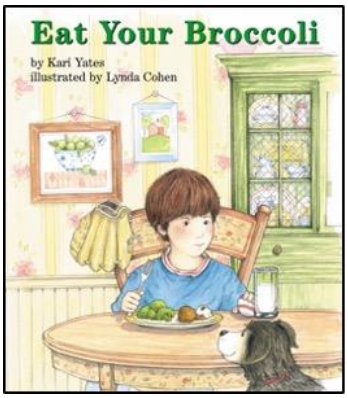
One time, when I was about seven, my mom told me I had to finish my Sloppy Joe (with onion not so cleverly hidden inside) before going out to play. Ugh! I just didn’t think I could do it! So, when Mom slipped out to check the laundry, I slipped the Sloppy Joe - bun and all - into the garbage can, carefully hiding it under a napkin and an egg carton.

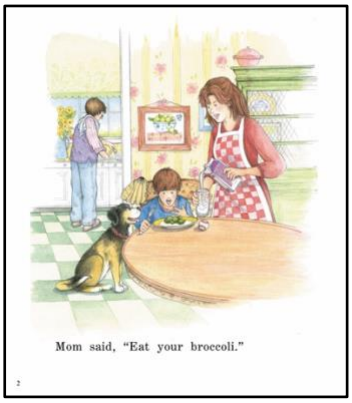
When she returned, I happily announced, “I’m done!” I guess she was surprised by how fast I was able to finish because she stepped right over to the trash can, lifted up the napkin and the egg carton, and fished out my uneaten Sloppy Joe - bun and all. (Don’t you wonder sometimes how grownups seem to just know stuff?)

I’m older now and I eat lots of things I’d once been nervous about. I even eat peppers and mushrooms and tomatoes and some kinds of nuts. But even as a mom and grandma myself, I’m still a picky eater when it comes to certain things.

Like onions. And coconut. And walnuts.

I wrote *Eat Your Broccoli* because it seems to me that almost everyone has things they don’t like to eat. But sometimes even the best picky-eater strategies don’t work out the way we plan!





Kari Yates as a kid

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