

BREAD AND JAM FOR FRANCES



by Russell Hoban
Pictures by Lillian Hoban



It was breakfast time,
and everyone was at the table.
Father was eating his egg.
Mother was eating her egg.
Gloria was sitting in a high chair and eating her egg too.
Frances was eating bread and jam.
“What a lovely egg!” said Father.
“If there is one thing I am fond of for breakfast,
it is a soft-boiled egg.”
“Yes,” said Mother, spooning up egg for the baby,
“it is just the thing to start the day off right.”
“Ah!” said Gloria, and ate up her egg.
Frances did not eat her egg.
She sang a little song to it.



She sang the song very softly:

*I do not like the way you slide,
I do not like your soft inside,
I do not like you lots of ways,
And I could do for many days
Without eggs.*



“What did you say, Frances?” asked Father.

“Nothing,” said Frances,

spreading jam on another slice of bread.

“Why do you keep eating bread and jam,” asked Father,
“when you have a lovely soft-boiled egg?”

“One of the reasons I like bread and jam,” said Frances,
“is that it does not slide off your spoon in a funny way.”



“Well, of course,” said Father,
“not everyone is fond of soft-boiled eggs for breakfast.
But there are other kinds of eggs.
There are sunny-side-up and sunny-side-down eggs.”
“Yes,” said Frances. “But sunny-side-up eggs
lie on the plate and look up at you in a funny way.
And sunny-side-down eggs just lie on their stomachs and *wait*.”
“What about scrambled eggs?” said Father.
“Scrambled eggs fall off the fork
and roll under the table,” said Frances.
“I think it is time for you to go to school now,”
said Mother.



Frances picked up her books, her lunch box,
and her skipping rope.
Then she kissed Mother and Father good-bye
and went to the bus stop.

*Jam on biscuits, jam on toast,
Jam is the thing that I like most. . . .
Raspberry, strawberry, gooseberry, I'm very
FOND . . . OF . . . JAM!*

Frances is a fussy eater. In fact, the only thing she likes is bread and jam. She won't touch her squishy soft-boiled egg. She trades away her chicken-salad sandwich at lunch. She turns up her nose at boring veal cutlet. Unless Mother Badger can come up with a plan, Frances just might go on eating bread and jam forever!

"The humor and the writing style are, as always, delicious."

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"Makes its point for fussy eaters—and their parents—gently, amusingly, and most effectively."

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