

One extra chocolate chip

*Based on a true story. Names have been changed to protect the guilty.*

The first thing the girls, age ten and twelve, learned to bake was chocolate chip cookies.

Bethany was the meticulous eldest. She lined up the ingredients on the counter in advance and flattened each half cup of sugar with a knife. Leah had to be reminded to fill the teaspoon of salt over the sink, lest she overflow it into the batter and irrevocably ruin the cookies, again. The two differed so much in their approach, they had to take turns when the mood for cookies struck them.

One summer's day, Bethany made the cookie dough. Leah took up the swatter to clear the kitchen of the inevitable influx of flies that came with having the door open to the sunshine.

Bethany gave Leah a dark look. "Don't swing over the bowl," she threatened.

"Obviously not!" Leah replied. She went back to work, deftly slaying pests with each swing.

"Careful!" Bethany warned again when Leah leaned far over the counter to catch a fly off the lampshade.

"I am being careful!"

Leah moved away from the turning mixer, appeasing Bethany. Confident her warning had been heeded, Bethany left to grab a book to read as the cookies baked. She returned to the kitchen to find Leah standing idly, her expression decidedly sheepish.

Bethany's stomach sank. "You didn't!" she exclaimed.

Leah shrugged apologetically. "I guess one of the chocolate chips has legs."

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