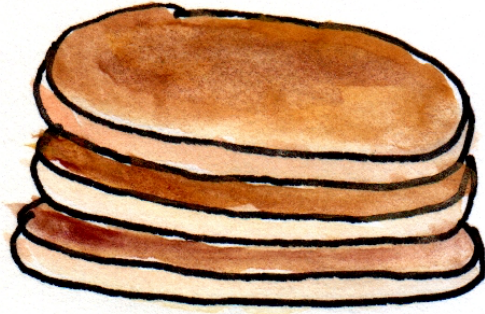




Pancakes

by Douglas Evans

“Pancakes for breakfast,” said James.

James’ mother had promised him pancakes for breakfast. Now James sat at the kitchen table, waiting for the pancakes to arrive.

Finally, James’ mom entered the kitchen. She was dressed for work, although still brushing her hair.

“Pancakes for breakfast,” James called out.

“Oh, James, I’m sorry,” said his mother. “I’m late for a meeting. We’ll have to pick up pancakes for you on the way to school.”

Minutes later, James was riding in the front seat of his car. Halfway to school, his mother turned into a fast-food restaurant.

“An order of pancakes to go,” she called to the man in the drive-up window.

James’ pancakes came in a long plastic plate with a clear plastic

cover. The pancakes were hot. The cover was steamy.

James placed the plate on his lap and removed the cover. Oh, those pancakes smelled good. Beside the stack of three pancakes, he found a plastic knife and fork wrapped in a napkin. On the other side lay two packets of maple syrup.

“Pancakes for breakfast,” James said as he dribbled some clear brown syrup onto the stack.

Bull’s-eye! The stream hit the center of the top pancake. It split three ways and flowed off the circle.

As James unwrapped the plastic knife and fork, his mother called out, “James, don’t eat in the car. Wait until we get to your playground.”

Once at school, James carried the plastic pancake plate to the tire swing. He sat pretzel-style on the asphalt with the pancakes in his lap.

“Pancakes for breakfast,” he said, pouring more syrup onto the stack.

Bull’s-eye!

At that moment, the school bell rang.

“James, no time to eat your pancakes here!” called the teacher on playground duty. “Eat them inside.”

Holding the pancakes with both hands, James entered his school. He carried them down the hall to his classroom. He sat at his desk and set the plastic plate on his desktop. With the plastic knife, he sliced the stack of pancakes in half. He sliced the halves into halves and those halves into two

more pieces.

“Pancakes for breakfast,” James said.

“James, no eating in this classroom!” came a shout from the front of the room. James’ teacher stood up from her desk. She pointed to the door. “March straight to the office, young man. And take that food with you!”

Back down the hall, James walked with the pancake plate. He entered the office and sat down on a plastic chair. The pancakes were still warm and oozing with syrup. Oh, they smelled good. He picked up the plastic fork and stabbed the biggest piece.

“Pancakes for breakfast,” James said.

The school secretary looked up from her computer.

“James!” she called out. “The principal would like to talk with you.”

Carrying the pancakes, James entered the principal’s room. The white-haired principal was sitting behind his desk, talking on the telephone.

James sat in a soft chair before the desk and placed the pancakes on his lap. He picked up the plastic fork with the pancake piece still on the end.

“Pancakes for breakfast,” James said.

The principal hung up the phone. He looked at James and shook his head. “James, your teacher called from your classroom,” he said. “We can’t have students eating breakfast at school. I’m calling your mother and sending you home. Go wait for her by the front door.”

Still holding his plastic plate of pancakes, James left the office. He

marched down the hall and out the school's front door. There he sat on the cement steps with the plate of pancakes on his lap.

"Pancakes for breakfast," James said.

He picked up the plastic fork and placed the syrupy piece of pancake on his tongue. Oh, how good it tasted. He pierced another portion and ate that one as well. Delicious! The next piece was just as good. Oh, oh! So were all the rest.

Smiling, James rubbed the last pancake section around in the leftover syrup. As he slipped it into his mouth, his mother drove up.

James stood and dropped the plastic plate into a trashcan. He wiped his sticky lips with the back of his hand.

"Pancakes for breakfast," he said. "Just what I wanted."