

More than Ten Steps

By Amy N.

"Is that the mail?" Ann lifted her head. "I can't believe how delayed it is during the holidays!" Her husband, Doug, peeked over her shoulder.

"Looks like it. I'll get it, so you can finish supper," he said as he slipped on his coat. Ann looked doubtful.

"It's very icy tonight, and cold. Why don't we just wait until tomorrow?"

"It's only ten steps, Ann! I'll be back before you have the rolls buttered!" Doug grinned.

"Alright, that's fine. Even though you know I never butter rolls!" Doug was already out the door, so Ann turned back to her spaghetti. She glanced at the clock. 6:08! Dinner kept being put off more and more.

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Ann drained the noodles and added the sauce. After the hamburger meat had been dumped in, she stirred everything and brought it to the table.

She looked out the window, but couldn't distinguish anything through the flying snow.

She drained the beans, set them on the table, brought the rolls over, straightened the tablecloth- and

looked at the clock. 6:14. She calmed herself. Doug was probably looking at some letters in the entry.

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Two minutes later, and she couldn't smooth the tablecloth anymore.

Five minutes later, and the rolls couldn't have been arranged in a more attractive display.

One minute later, and she knew that something was definitely wrong. Walking across the kitchen, she opened the door to the entry. She timidly cracked the outside door.

"Doug?" Her voice was drowned in the whistling of the wind. Ann bit her lip, closed both doors, and sat at the kitchen table. Ten minutes, she told herself.

Two minutes later, she nearly upset the spaghetti as the door banged open. Doug came in, encrusted in snow, and leaned against the doorpost.

"It was more than ten steps," he gasped.

What took him so long? You decide. Finish the story, and email it to harnefamilia@gmail.com (or mail it to the address on the submissions page). Include your name and age, and the ending of the story should be 300 words or less. Your story might be published in the next issue!