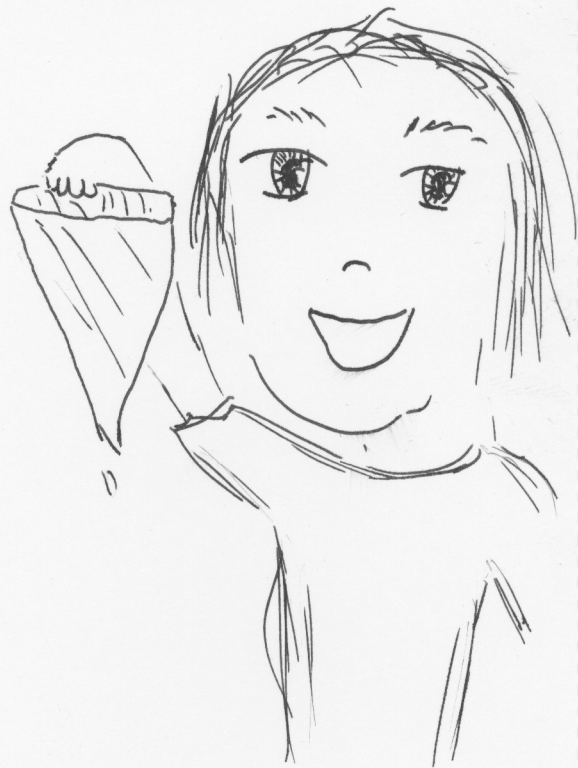


Zoey
and the
Zero-Topping
Pizza



Hyena Smith

A girl named Zoey was visiting a museum in New York City with her family. They decided to get some pizza before returning to the museum for the 7:30 planetarium show.



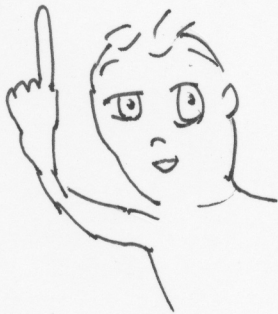
The plan was they would each get a slice of pizza. There was a long line, it being dinnertime, and everyone was very hungry.



The line was so long that it seemed to loop around twice. She heard each person in line tell the pizzeria owner what kind of pizza they wanted.



I'll have a slice of orange peel pizza, please.



Make mine an alfalfa sprouts with onions.



May I have a slice of beans and pepperoni?



Spaghetti pizza! Thank you, thank you, thank you!



I've heard all about your kiwi and avocado pizza! I want that! Please.



If you haven't run out, I'd like two slices of cauliflower and sausage.



Finally it was Zoey's turn to order.



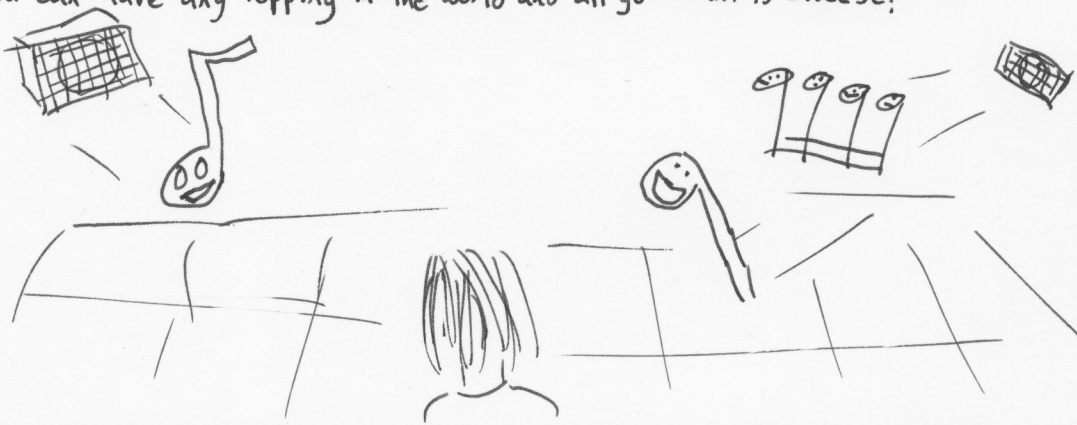
May I please have a slice of cheese pizza?



There was silence except for the music playing over the speakers. The customers in the pizzeria looked at her like she had grown two heads. A few people gasped in disbelief.



The music seemed to be laughing at her, even though it had no words. CHEESE?
You can have any topping in the world and all you want is CHEESE?



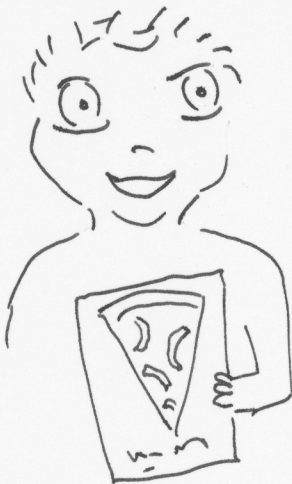
The pizzeria owner had never witnessed such a scene. All the child wanted was a slice without toppings.



The customers began to brag about how they had each picked the best type of pizza.



Just think, orange peel pizza! I will be very healthy!



Alfalfa sprouts and onions will give me all the energy I need for my marathon tomorrow.



Beans and pepperoni, all the major food groups!



I'm visiting from out of town. It's not every day I get to have spaghetti pizza!



I've tried the entire menu here and all that's left is kiwi and avocado.



I'm a food critic and I'm on assignment to try the world-famous cauliflower and sausage pizza. But you've settled on just plain cheese?



Zoey said, "Yes. It's my favorite. I've had other toppings before, but nothing is as tasty to me as regular cheese pizza."



All of a sudden a pizzeria employee came through a door in the back and whispered to the owner. Then the pizzeria owner cleared her throat. "Ahem. Sorry, folks. I'm sad to say that we have no toppings tonight. The garden out back got eaten up by chipmunks and bad weather delayed our 6:00 delivery of the other toppings you ordered for your pizzas. We usually have them, but we're fresh out."



Zoey felt bad for the other customers who couldn't have the kind of pizza they wanted. "Maybe we can all have a pizza party," she said. "With cheese pizza!"



The owner shouted, "What a fantastic idea! It's on the house! What's your name, party animal?" Zoey told her. Everyone had lemonade and they played Zoey's favorite music over the speakers.



Afterwards on the chalkboard menu the pizzeria owner erased "CHEESE" and wrote "THE ZOEY SPECIAL."

THE ZOEY SPECIAL



At the planetarium later Zoey was inventing constellations, which are what people see when they connect the dots between stars. And guess what the first constellation she invented was...

