



# Victor's Victuals

By Cara Bafle

## **FIRST NARRATOR:**

Victor stood motionless with his head behind his locker door. He hoped he was alone in the hallway because it was still early; the bell had not yet rung for lunch. But a shadow between the hinges of the door told him he was not so lucky. It was about to happen...again.

## **BULL:**

Give it to me, "Vicky."

## **VICTOR:**

Bull, please, this is mine. I haven't had lunch all week.

## **BULL:**

Now!

## **SECOND NARRATOR:**

A defeated Victor handed over his brown paper bag. It was going to be another long hungry afternoon. Good thing he'd eaten a big breakfast and packed a snack for later.

## **BULL:**

See you Monday..."Vicky."

## **FIRST NARRATOR:**

Later that day, Victor's mother again noticed his newfound appreciation for her cooking. For the fifth day in a row, he had nearly licked his dinner plate clean.

**MOM:**

Victor, you know it makes me happy to see you polish off my tuna casserole, but are you feeling okay? You've been so hungry every night this week.

**VICTOR:**

Uh, we've been busy at school. I guess it makes me hungry.

**MOM:**

You *are* taking time for lunch, though, right?

**VICTOR:**

Sure. We have lunch.

**MOM:**

Good! You need to get ready now. Your dad is on his way.

**SECOND NARRATOR:**

On the way to his father's house for the weekend, Victor searched his mind for a solution to his problem. Should he stand up to Bull and refuse to give up his lunch? Should he tell a teacher or the principal what Bull was doing? Should he just tell his mother he was sick and stay home from school on Monday?

**DAD:**

Victor, your mom says you've been eating her out of house and home this week. What's up with that?

**VICTOR:**

Dad, if you knew someone was doing something wrong, what would you do?

**DAD:**

That's a tough question to answer without all the details, Victor, but I hope I'd be brave enough to talk to someone I trusted. Can I help?

**VICTOR:**

A guy at school has been taking my lunch every day.

**DAD:**

That *is* a problem. No wonder you've been hungry for supper.

**VICTOR:**

I'm starving by the time I get home. This has been one of the hardest weeks of my life. Why did he have to pick on me?

**DAD:**

That's a good question, Victor. Maybe he likes your mom's cooking! But the real question is -- why is he doing it at all?

**VICTOR:**

Because he *can*. That's what I think.

**DAD:**

Maybe...but there could be more to it than that. Why don't you come with me after school on Monday and we'll talk about it. In the meantime, your mom will give you an extra lunch for Monday.

**FIRST NARRATOR:**

Monday morning arrived too soon, and, sure enough, Bull appeared again to snatch Victor's lunch. This time, Victor had brought an extra lunch, but it was clear the Bull problem hadn't disappeared.

**SECOND NARRATOR:**

After school, Dad picked up Victor and drove him to the neighborhood food bank where he worked.

**VICTOR:**

Why are so many people here, Dad?

**DAD:**

That's not unusual, Victor. Do you remember when the factory closed down a few months ago? A lot of people lost their jobs. No work means no money, and no money means no food.

**FIRST NARRATOR:**

Victor spent the rest of the day helping to give out food items to the people who came to the food bank. He was surprised to see faces he recognized standing in line to receive free cereal, canned goods, and more. Suddenly, his week without lunch didn't seem so bad.

**CLIENT:**

Do you have fruit laces? My son Harold loves them.

**VICTOR:**

I'll look. Yes, here you go.

**CLIENT:**

Thank you.

**SECOND NARRATOR:**

Victor had a lot to think about when he got home that evening. First, he shared an idea with his father. Then he spoke to his mother. Finally, together, they made a plan for the next day. When Bull approached on Tuesday morning, Victor was ready.

**VICTOR:**

Hi, Bull. Here's the lunch my mom made for you. She hopes you enjoy it. Also in the bag is a flyer from the food bank where my dad works. If you need food, the food bank can help. If you don't need food, maybe *you* can help the food bank.

**BULL:**

Um, thanks.

**FIRST NARRATOR:**

-- said a dumbfounded Bull.

**BULL:**

Fruit laces! My favorite!

**SECOND NARRATOR:**

Victor didn't have time to think about Bull's remark, though. He was in a rush to finish his own lunch. He had an important meeting afterward with his father and Mr. Aims, the school guidance counselor.

**VICTOR:**

Mr. Aims, we have an idea. We want to provide food for students and families who are hungry.

**MR. AIMS:**

I know there are families who can't afford to buy all the food they need, but many are embarrassed to get free lunches in the cafeteria.

**DAD:**

They won't come to our food bank, either. But the children do come to school. If the food bank supplies the food, will the school distribute it?

**VICTOR:**

I'll pack the items in bags and you can give them out after school on Fridays. That way, no one will notice, but the families will have what they need for the weekend and the next week.

**MR. AIMS:**

That could make a big difference for so many of our students. Kids who are hungry don't concentrate or cooperate well; they often have learning and behavior issues. Let me talk to the principal about your offer.

**FIRST NARRATOR:**

As they said goodbye, Mr. Aims spotted Bull tossing a rubber ball down the hallway.

**MR. AIMS:**

Harold, don't you have someplace you need to be?

**SECOND NARRATOR:**

As Bull nodded and ducked into a classroom, Victor's dad shook the hand of Mr. Aims, and then his son.

**DAD:**

I'm proud of you, Victor. You saw a need and found a way to help. Now, let's get to work!

