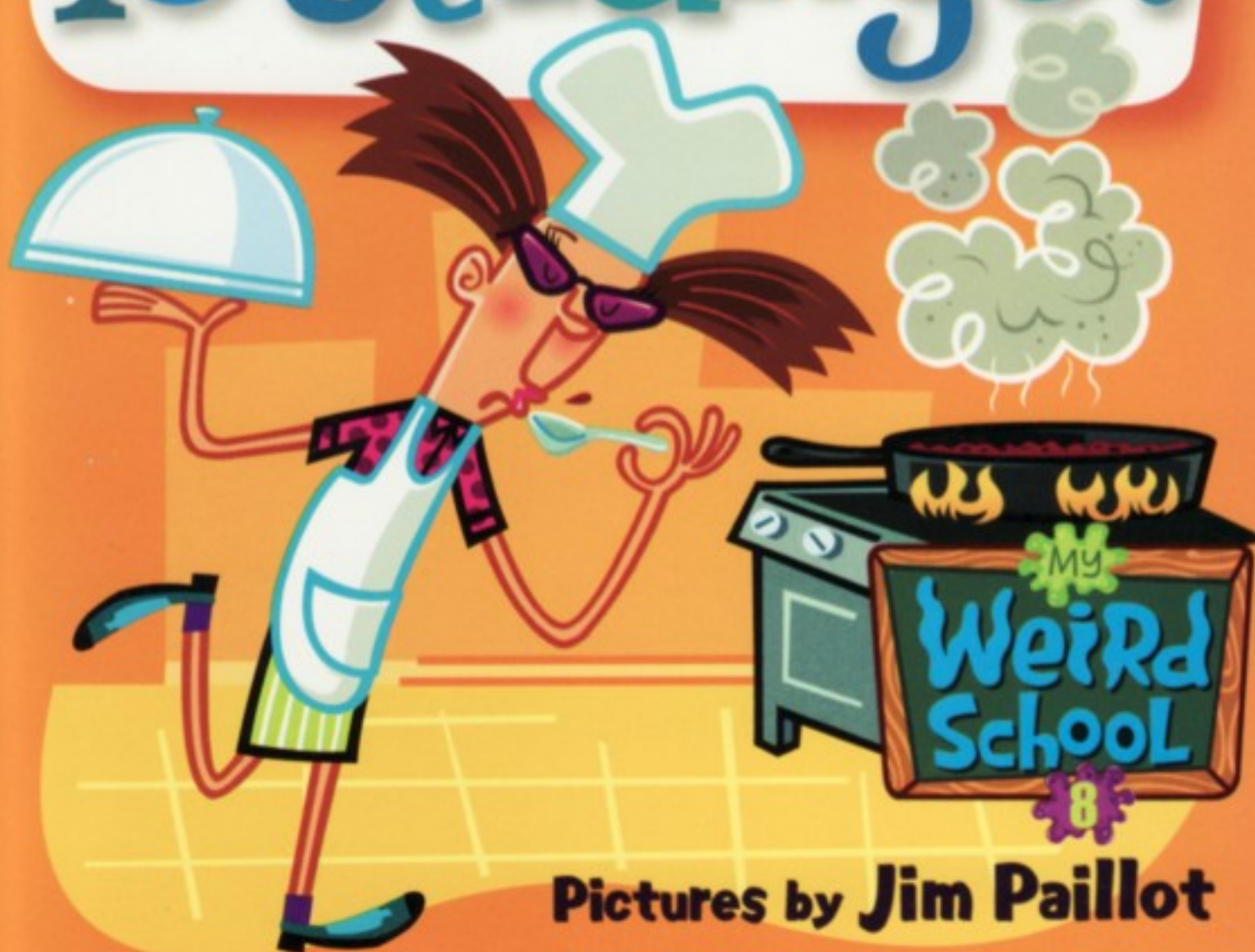


**Dan
Gutman**



Ms. LaGrange Is Strange!



Pictures by Jim Paillot

A Pretty Normal Lunch

My name is A.J. and I hate school.

"Which do you hate more," my friend Ryan asked me, "school or vegetables?"

"Hmmm, that's a hard one," I said. "I really hate them both."

"I hate school more than vegetables," said our friend Michael, who never ties

his shoes, "because we don't have to sit inside a vegetable all day and learn stuff."

"Good point," I agreed.

"I hate vegetables more than school," Ryan said, "because we don't have to *eat* the school."

That made perfect sense too. I couldn't make up my mind.

We were in the vomitorium. It was a pretty normal lunch at Ella Mentry School. Ryan stuck carrot sticks in his mouth and said, "Look, I'm a walrus!" Michael put a spoon on his nose, and it hung there. I dared Ryan to put pickle chips on his Tater Tots and eat them. Ryan will eat anything.

Michael dared me to shoot a straw wrapper at Andrea Young, this girl at the next table who is really annoying. The wrapper hit Andrea in the head. She screamed and knocked her apple juice on the floor.

Just at that moment, Andrea's annoying friend Emily was walking by with her tray. Emily slipped on the juice and fell on her butt. As she was falling, she knocked over a whole rack of lunch trays.

Crash!

"Ouch!" Emily shouted. "I bumped my mouth. My tooth is loose!"

I don't know why, but when people fall on their butt, it's hilarious. Me and Ryan




Something weird is going on!

Ms. LaGrange talks funny, and she's from some other country called France! She thinks the vomitorium is a fancy restaurant! Plus

she's writing secret messages in the mashed potatoes. Ms. LaGrange is the weirdest lunch lady in the history of the world!



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