Chapter 1

A Day in Siberia

The sun's rays stroked her face, waking her from a deep sleep. Ruchi rubbed her eyes. It was cold. She pulled the covers higher, up to her nose.

She heard pots clanging, the tapping of shoes on the wooden floor. Mommy was already busy in the kitchen.

What day was it today? Could it be Friday? Yes, it was Friday!

Even though Ruchi was only four and a half, she knew the days of the week. If it was Friday, that meant Shabbos was coming!

Ruchi loved Shabbos. She threw off her covers, washed her hands, and got dressed quickly.

Ruchi skipped into the kitchen. Mommy was standing by the stove, watching the small pot of milk come to a boil.

Only her Mommy could bring home some extra milk. This was Siberia, 1944, and the problem in Siberia in 1944 was that there wasn't enough food.

Bread, and not much else, was given out once a week at the Distribution Center. But Mommy knew how to sew and embroider. She exchanged her beautiful

things for some milk from a woman who had a cow in her backyard. Or for some eggs from another who had a chicken.

"Is it Friday?" Ruchi asked Mommy.

Mommy smiled. "You're almost right. Tomorrow will be Friday. Today is Thursday."

The milk was rising in the pot. Mommy quickly took the pot off the fire before the milk spilled over. She placed it on the table to cool.

Ruchi sniffed deeply. She licked her lips. She could almost taste the milk.

When it would cool, a creamy skin would form on top. Mommy would spread the creamy skin on a piece of bread for a delicious treat.

Meow! Meow!