

## Teddy Kola – Chapter 5

### In the mess

Kola, Pepsi and Zee-Zee entered the lunchroom, where a toddler table was set up for the three tots, and Gem was sitting in a highchair, with a pink rubber bib on. The bib had a catcher to catch missed food.

“Zee-Zee!” Gem squealed.

Zee-Zee dutifully went up to Gem’s highchair and walked up the little steps that were placed beside it for him to reach up to his little sister. Gem opened her arms for a big hug from her big clever brother. Zee-Zee gave Gem the biggest hug.

“You’ve played with Kola well!” he said pleased.

“Kola Teddy!” Gem said, still adamant he is a teddy, just that he’s not a bear.

“Hehe, ok, he’s Teddy, but look what Teddy has!” smiled Zee-Zee.

Kola held Grub up, smiling at Gem.

“Ahh, Teddy has Grub!” smiled Gem, reaching her little arms out for him.

Zee-Zee stepped down to allow Kola to step up to Gem’s highchair. Kola approached, but his little legs struggled a bit with the steps, so Zee-Zee, being the clever the squirrel he is, stepped behind Kola in case he was needed to stop him from falling, making sure his paws were ready. Pepsi was looking a little worried, so approached the steps too, in case Zee-Zee wouldn’t be enough.

Kola reached Gem’s level, and handed her Grub, fully expecting her to snatch it off him still. Of course, she is only a little baby squirrel, Kola knows she would not mean anything by it. But instead of snatching, she just hugged Grub, with Kola still holding on to it.

“Grub Grub!” said Gem softly.

“Ta Teddy!” she added, thanking Kola.

Kola was able to let go.

“Zee-Zee found him!” Kola said but he was appreciative of the thanks.

Gem was too entrenched with Grub to thank her little brother.

“Oh it’s ok, Gem’s happy, that’s the main thing!” said Zee-Zee, helping Kola down.

Pepsi took Kola’s paw.

“Good baby brother!” she said giggling.

Kola just rubbed her head, as the three littles sat at the table. Sarah brought in a sippy cup for Zee-Zee, an open breaker for Pepsi, and a baby bottle of milk for both Gem and Kola. Gem sucked her bottle looking at the three friends, but realised she was alone in her highchair. Sure, she has Grub, but she had no attention from the others.

Pepsi noticed.

"You Ok Gem?" asked Pepsi.

Gem didn't respond, she just sighed.

Zee-Zee became a little concerned too, as did Kola.

"Do you want something sis?" he asked

Gem just looked down, with a sad looking frown on her little face.

"You lonely Gem?" asked Kola.

"You want someone to sit next to you?" he added.

Gem gave a little smile.

"You want Zee-Zee?" Kola asked.

Gem gave a little nod, and Zee-Zee being the kind loving brother, smiled.

"We can move the highchair closer." Suggested Kola.

"Oh, well, Gem can get messy when she's eating, we will all end up with food in our fur!" said Zee-Zee, knowing it's not a good idea.

"But we can't leave Gem on her own, perhaps Jo or Sarah can bring in another highchair?" Pepsi thought.

Zee-Zee smile soon turned to a little sneer, as he was, of course, not too happy about that idea!

"But I... I..., I'm too big for a highchair!" he said blushing a little.

"Not for you silly Zee-Zee! I mean for Kola! He's a baby too today!" giggled Pepsi turning to Kola.

"Yeh! Teddy! Teddy!" said Gem, excited she will be eating with her teddy.

Kola sighed.

"Please Kola, it will mean a lot to Gem!" pleaded Zee-Zee.

"Oh ok!" sighed Kola, not wanting to let Gem down.

Soon Sarah came in with a plates of little sandwiches, and veggie sticks with hummus.

"Uh Sarah..." asked Kola.

"What's up Kola?" she responded.

"Can I sit next to Gem?" Kola asked.

"Uh well, it's difficult, we don't have another table, and Gem does make a bit of a mess!" Sarah answered.

Kola hesitated, before his asked:

"Can I sit in a highchair?" he asked blushing.

"Well, if you want you, it will be nice for Gem to have company while she eats, but it will be messy!" said Sarah.

"I'll bring another one in." Sarah added before she left.

"Thank you Kola, you are so kind!" said Zee-Zee with a smile on his face.

"Another hug?" he added.

Kola nodded, and Zee-Zee came over to hug Kola, with Pepsi joining in.

"I love you brother; you're being so nice!" said Pepsi.

Kola just smiled as he was being hugged by two of his favourite little furs. But soon as the highchair was brought in, and set up for him, he looked down and blushed. Sarah also brought in a set of steps for Pepsi or Zee-Zee to use.

"Here you go sweetie. Zee-Zee, Pepsi why don't you finish your lunch while I sort Kola out" smiled Sarah.

Zee-Zee and Pepsi returned to their places as Kola was lifted and put into the highchair. He felt embarrassed sitting in one in front of his friend and little sister, but accepted it as he was being strapped in.

"Sorry sweetie, we better put a bib on you. Gem may get a little excited with her meal!" Sarah said, putting on a rubber bib with a catcher – the only ones the centre has.

Kola settled in as he was given his lunch and bottle. Gem managed to reach Kola's arm to stroke his fur.

"Hi Teddy!" said Gem, rubbing her face in his arm.

Kola giggled, but soon enough Gem had a bowl of Spaghetti placed on her highchair tray.

"Oh no!" said Zee-Zee.

"Not spaghetti, she loves spaghetti!" he added.

"So, what's wrong with that?" asked Pepsi

"Uh you'll see!" said Zee-Zee, moving over to Pepsi's side of the table.

Kola was getting a little worried as Gem started grabbing the spaghetti with her hands.

"Now you two, this is the only thing Gem has taken to eating lately, she's got to eat something, and Kola's ok with his bib on." Said Sarah.

Kola, Pepsi and Zee-Zee continued with their little sandwiches and veggie snacks. Gem was having a great time sucking the spaghetti up in her mouth. However, Gem became entranced by the shape of the strings of pasta in the tomato sauce. So, as curious as ever, started to play with the spaghetti, amazed as the strings all change shape.

"You ok Gem?" asked Kola.

"Uh huh! Look!" Gem said, with her paws full off spaghetti and tomato sauce!

"Uh Kola you may want to watch out!" said Zee-Zee!

"Awww I'm sure its ok..." said Kola.

But before he could finish.... SPLAT!

A mound of spaghetti in sauce hit Kola in the face!

Gem had shaken it off her paw as she wanted to empty the rest of the spaghetti out of her bowl and onto the tray so she could make patterns with it. She then threw the bowl up which landed on her head like a hat. But Zee-Zee and Pepsi couldn't help but laugh at poor Kola, as he tried to wipe away some of Gem's meal from his face and fur.

Pepsi wanted to go up and help clean Kola, but then ducked, as more spaghetti ended up airborne. Zee-Zee giggled as he tried to get up to Kola to help him, but suddenly... a mound of spaghetti landed on his face too!

"Gem!" cried out Zee-Zee.

"You're being a messy little squirrel today!" he added.

But Gem was not listening. She was having so much fun with the spaghetti. It was all over the tray, on Zee-Zee, and of course poor Kola, who was unable to move out of his highchair, unlike Zee-Zee and Pepsi!

Gem turned to Kola and asked with a giggle:

"You like it Teddy?"

Kola couldn't respond, but Zee-Zee decided to turn a bit braver.

"We gotta get Gem and Kola cleaned up and let Miss Sarah know!" he said to Pepsi.

Pepsi agreed, and volunteered to get Sarah. Luckily most of the spaghetti was either on the floor, or on poor Kola, so Pepsi dashed to the door, missing a little airborne strand.

Zee-Zee went up to Gem's highchair and climbed the little steps to hold her paws.

"I think you've had enough sis!" giggled a brave Zee-Zee, hoping that will make her stop.

But Gem had other ideas in her little head:

"Look Zee-Zee, spaghetti!" she said, taking Zee-Zee's hand and swirling them on her highchair tray.

"Hey sis! I've had my lunch!" giggled Zee-Zee, his paws now covered in sauce.

Gem giggled as she gave Zee-Zee a big hug, covering him more sauce!

Zee-Zee, was covered in Gem's spaghetti and sauce as much as Kola!

"Two messy squirrels!" giggled Kola.

"And one messy Kola Teddy!" giggled Zee-Zee back to him.

As Sarah came in she was shocked at the mess, but calmly reassured Kola and Zee-Zee that she will clean them up. First she got the wipes, and cleaned Zee-Zee's hands, and then removed the tray from Gem's highchair so she can't cause anymore mess! Pepsi shyly came in, knowing that Gem would not be able to make her messy now!

Gem, without the tray, then had her straps removed, and was able to manoeuvre herself more freely and saw Kola in his highchair.

"Spaghetti Teddy!" she said smiling, gave him a hug.

Kola could only accept the hug and giggled at the mess both he, Zee-Zee and Gem were in.

Sarah thought cleaning them all with a baby wipes will be fruitless, so decided:

“I think you three need a bath today!”

Gem clapped her hand as she loved baths, whereas Zee-Zee and Kola both sighed.

“If Gem can make this mess, what will she be like in the bath?” Kola said

“Well it doesn’t matter with you two, as you will be having a bath as well!” remarked Sarah

Kola blushed, as he only ever took a bath with Pepsi, and not with anyone else. Zee-Zee didn’t mind as he just wanted to be clean. But Gem was excited as she loved splashing in water, and bath times were fun for her.

Pepsi asked Sarah:

“Can I help bath Kola?”

Sarah replied:

“Well, you’re going to get wet, with Gem involved, but I sure could use a hand! You can remove your dress, so it doesn’t get wet!”

Pepsi had second thoughts, but Kola is her baby big brother, so she did agree. She then helped clean Kola, which did embarrass him a little. Pepsi did a good job getting a lot of the excess sauce off his fur with the baby wipes and Kola smiled through his embarrassment. Zee-Zee helped Sarah clean up Gem, before Sarah decided:

“Right let’s get you lot to the bathroom!” announced Sarah.

Sarah got Gem and Kola out of their highchairs and carried Gem to the bathroom. Zee-Zee picked up Grub and followed Sarah and Gem with Kola and Pepsi.