

Marcella's Bagels

Have you ever been really in the mood to eat a bagel? Some pretty amazing things can get in the way of this pursuit.

Marcella was walking home from the bakery near the beach one day. She had just bought a big bag of bagels to share with her daughter, Sonya. Sonya loves bagels.

On the side of the road, two people were collecting food for families in need. Marcella decided that she had quite a few bagels in her bag. Sonya didn't need *that* many bagels.

"Here," said Marcella. "You can have half of my bagels." The people were very happy to get all of those bagels. Marcella thought for a moment and then said, "Aw, take one for each of yourselves." So there went two more.

As Marcella walked along the beach, some surfers came out of the water. They saw, and even smelled, the fresh bagels. "Could you, by any chance, spare a few bagels?" they pleaded. "We are so-o-o hungry after riding all of those gnarly waves."

As you might imagine, Marcella was not thrilled. But she had a good heart and recognized hunger when she saw it, so she handed her bag to the surfers. They took half of her bagels. Then, just as they were about to hand the bag back, they took two more.



continued ▶

Now, Marcella was a very reasonable person who liked to help others. She thought she still had enough bagels left to make Sonya happy. She walked on.

As you may already have guessed, Marcella didn't get far before she had another encounter. Just before she reached home, her friend Susan approached. After saying hello, Susan explained that she was on her way to get some bagels for her family. She seemed to be in a bit of a rush.

Generosity overtook Marcella. She found herself saying, "Why don't you save yourself the trip and take some of my bagels? As you can see, I've got several." So Susan took half of what Marcella had in the bag and then two more.

Marcella finally reached her front door. When she opened her once bulging bag of bagels, she discovered that there were only two left! She had a simple bagel lunch with her daughter Sonya, and then there were none.

After lunch, Sonya asked her mother how many bagels had been in the bag to begin with. Marcella told her the story of her walk. She then said that if Sonya could figure it out herself, Marcella would take her rollerblading in the park the next day.

Sonya took a while, but she eventually figured it out and got her rollerblading outing. What was Sonya's answer?