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New Language

by Anna Kathrin Weber

Oh, I loved my new language from the very first beginning. What a wonderful playground! I jumped in it like a baby dog. All these sounds and words and sentences and they are so patient with me, much more than any toy might be.

Once, I wanted to study Russian because I was so impressed by all these important Russian writers, like Dostojewski and Tolstoi. And also because I imagined it so exciting if a friend would have asked me to go to the movies and I would have been able to say: "Tomorrow? Oh, I'm sorry, but on Tuesdays I always have my Russian lessons." Wouldn't that have been something? What happened was that we didn't like each other, Russian and me. It was dark, important, heavy. Every time I did my homework I had this strange feeling, like Stalin himself was looking over my shoulder.

Then I was taken by French. But French is so sophisticated, and let's face it, even a little arrogant. I am not sophisticated at all and probably I am too naive, so - no chance, this language didn't suit me either. Even German would not be a language for me, if luck wouldn't have it had, that I was born in Germany. I mean, seriously, how can I like a language where a funny, multicolored, zippy something is called Schmetterling? Try to say it loud: Schmetterling. It sounds as big and heavy as Rhinoceros, doesn't it? But of course in German they call all the little butterflies by that name.

But English, ah English! All these nice little words like *cozy*, and *tiny*, and *flimsy*, and *ladybug*, and *hummingbird*, and *giggle*, and *grumble* and, of course *daisy*...How can anyone not love these words? *Cozy*, melts like Peanut Butter on my tongue. It is comfortable like my granny's house, it is about tea and muffins and old pictures. It is soft and furry and its color is beige or light-grey or maybe a broken white.

Grumble is a grandfather, *mousy* looks out of its whole with big eyes, *tiny* is pink, and *flimsy* is china with a rose décor on it and a golden brim. Even *grubby* and *shabby* do sound like nice words, if you don't have to live in a house like that. *Plush* is wine-red and too expensive for me, *smile* is better than *smirk*.

Sometimes I just open my dictionary and start to read: *sluice - slum - slump - slung - slunk - slur - slurp - slush - slut - sly - smack!* Isn't that a poem by itself?

We are getting on so well together, my English and me. English is as nice and comfortable as my pale blue tennis shoes. English has my color and is my size. I think every person has a language he or she is born for and not necessarily does it have to be one's mother tongue. Maybe yours is Swahili, who knows?