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MACGYVER

IN THE KITCHEN

WINDOW-SHOPPING IS LIKE TAKING A PICTURE IN FRONT OF SOMEONE ELSE'S FANCY-PANTS SPORTS CAR. IT'S NOT REALLY YOURS, BUT YOU PRETEND IT IS FOR JUST A MINUTE.



I imagine myself buying shiny new things for my kitchen every time I walk by displays of cooking toys. As much as I would like to justify the beautiful KitchenAid stand mixer, and although I'm certain my cupcakes and truffles would be jumping for joy right out of their baking pans, I can't bring myself to spend almost \$300 on one indulgent piece of equipment. When Momo Catering grows up to make it to the big leagues, I'll spoil my humble kitchen, but until then, I'll just stick to playing MacGyver!

Growing up we didn't have a lot, and my parents pulled tricks out of their sleeves to make ends meet and great things happen. It's a stretch from kitchen tools, but here's a story I'm going to tell anyway: One time my sister was working on a school project due the following day. This cute, pint-sized 6-year old who was always fretting about perfection was almost in tears because her project wasn't put together yet. And of course, as irony would have it, we were out of glue sticks. Well, Dad came to his little princess' rescue using the starchy stickiness of cooked, mashed jasmine rice. He transformed a dining staple into glue, saving my sister's project. Anything can serve multiple purposes if you just keep an open mind.

How can you play MacGyver in your kitchen? I'm glad you asked. Take the KitchenAid mixer for example. A compact hand mixer will do just fine for most mixing and blending purposes. The old school hand powered mixers provide a classic style and an electric one is excellent when preparing a creamy cake batter. Although the delicious looking stand mixers that come in a variety of colors with a stainless steel bowl and mixing attachments are eye candy for any countertop, they are not a necessity for the budget cook.

Speaking of eye candy, when I first started making truffles, I would marvel at those amazing chocolatiers featured in magazines and websites.

As a semi-professional chocolate eater, I had a good idea of what I was looking to achieve when making these delicious treats myself. Most instructions call for a double boiler in order to melt the chocolate bark and maintain a low heat point. Well, if I bought tools for every food adventure I went on, I would most likely deplete my piggy bank. So, what to do? A double boiler is basically a pot of boiling water with another one on top of it, bathing in steam rather than direct heat. Piece of cake! Rummage around the things you already have for a metal or Pyrex bowl and throw it on top of a pot of simmering water; just be careful that the bowl fits snugly on top of the pot so steam doesn't escape around the edges. There you go, your very own DIY double boiler!

Hard work deserves to be rewarded, but sometimes people reward themselves before really earning anything simply because they can. I grew up working hard for everything I had, and those experiences still stick with me as personal values. It just feels better to know that the things you allow yourself to have you truly need. Dear loyal readers, resourcefulness goes further than you think. Before springing for a new addition to your clutter, challenge yourself to think like MacGyver and come up with the same functionality in things you already have.

BY MOON JAMALUDDIN

