

I did a really unpleasant thing the day before yesterday. It was totally necessary; in fact, it was a service to my family. There is the most delicious yet simple meal that is very traditional around this area, but to make it requires getting your hands dirty. That special meal is barbecue chicken. Now, that doesn't mean that we actually put chicken on a barbecue outside. This type of barbecue chicken is cooked in the oven, the longer the better. For this dish, I use the drumsticks (or legs). I have to, very meticulously, peel off the skin from the raw chicken legs, one at a time, before putting them into a deep oven-proof dish. I do about twenty to thirty at a time. This is the unpleasant part, partly because it isn't easy, but mainly because the skin feels slimey, and gets under your nails. But that's the sacrifice you have to make. You put the lid on the dish and into the oven it goes at about 400 degrees for at least an hour. No water, oil, or condiments are needed. You just bake the bejeebies out of the drumsticks. The next step is to take the dish out of the oven, and to discard at least three quarters of the juice that has come out of the meat. Just throw it away. Then cover the legs with barbecue sauce, either one large bottle or two small ones. Honey barbecue sauce is a favorite around here, as well as smokey flavored sauce. Well, you cover the dish again and put it back in the oven, this time at 300 degrees for an hour, or even better, two hours. The meat will be more tender the more you cook it. And that, my friends, is it. Simple, simple, simple. It goes really well with mashed potatoes, baked beans, and a crispy salad or coleslaw. The meat literally falls off the bone, and there is no fat or skin to deal with, so even children can tuck in without complaining. It is great if left overnight in the fridge, or even frozen for a while and then reheated. You can't really go wrong with it, as far as using it for left-overs. In fact, I had some for breakfast just yesterday!

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: meticulous, raw, the 'bejeebies', to discard.

1. That cake decorator is meticulous. You should see the details she puts on wedding cakes.
2. We cannot eat the turkey; it is still raw on the inside.
3. The boxers beat the bejeebies out of each other and had to go to hospital.
4. Open the package and discard the little packet of silica inside; it must be thrown away and not eaten.