The Greatest Aspirin Of All: A Glesele Tay

BY VERA MILLER

If you had a sore throat... Ma gave you a glesele tay.

If you were too tired to finish your homework... Ma gave you a glesele tay.

If you had an emotional problem... a glesele tay.

In a restaurant the other day, I asked for tea. I was served a cold cup and saucer partnered with a white paper kopyil filled with tea bits to which was attached a parrachute rip cord.

I picked up the square by the little rip cord, opened the hatch of the pewter bathysphere and immersed the shocked-white paper kopyil in the hot liquid. Then I poured out the pale liquid into the cup and added the contents of another little imprinted white tissue krippe which imprisoned granules of sugar.

Remember sugar when tea drinking was a ceremony—a solver of problems—traditional?

THE RITUAL

First, glasses were put to the table. Saucers were thick and usually erased from years of use. The box of tea was put on the back of the stove. The kettle was filled with cold water and put on. The ruccoo spoons from the glass container were put away.

On the table was mondol bread and some kiches. Also, the cut glass dish filled with sugar cubes and the bowl from the china cabinet into which was scooped thick home-made strawberry or cherry preserves.

When the kettle started to emit a stream of steam, the boiling water was swirled around in the tshenik, tea spooned into its steaming inwards and the kettle returned to the stove to steam up the wall behind it.

The tea was less steep; a piece of turkish towel over the entire tea pot and brought to the table. How many times have you tried to make tea—first, water in a glass container, only?

Remember when Ma did it? Day after day. She'd put the silver spoon or knife into the glass and poured into it the boiling water from the tshenik.

Occasional breakage had a scientific explanation: "Moishe shuffled the table and it didn't pour even."

You could have tea with lemon, a sugar cube, jelly; and for the children—always tea with "a drop milk." But you always had tea with a sugar cube. No manual ever pictured tea drinking instructions as they varied from one household to another.

First you let the brewed tea roll over the teaspoon to inspect the color. Hold glass firmly in cup using little finger for balance. Brace under finger to project glass to tip forward. As downward motion increases glass is tilted to 90 degree angle.

Hold bottom of glass slightly above saucer rim and pour your small amount of tea into saucer. Roll saucer in a counter-clockwise motion; place hands around saucer with thumb and index finger exerting force of balance with little finger directly on bottom of saucer. The fourth finger will serve as intake guide.

WOHN'T YOU WRITE?

As this column is a addition in The Sentinel, we would appreciate hearing from readers whether they like or not. What would you like to see included? We'd be happy to hear.

Place cube of sugar between front teeth. When all liquid has been absorbed, return glass to saucer. Then select thick quarter slice of lemon to be squeezed and scraped against edge of glass. Note: do not remove seeds before squeezing lemon into glass.

Adding preserves—With quick motion dip spoon into bowl of preserves. Bring quickly to glass and tip spoon so that preserves float slowly down. (Remember: it's not fair to wish with the spoon until entire contents of spoon are drained into glass and all the seeds settle on bottom of glass)

NOW IT'S READY

Now—now immerse spoon and stir. As you "steer" the tea, all the strawberry seeds will caust into your soup. Now—tea is ready to drink. However, you must place a sugar cube between the front tooth on which these together with sugar liquid must float.

Remember how the kids' arguments were amicably settled when Ma stood up against the stove; listening and finishing her tea? Or the glesele tay shared by the family in the glass of the Shabbos candles when the baker made his momentous announcement concerning his marriage plans?

Shabbos dinner over? Make a chinkis tay. With a drop milk for the kinder.