

## Greek Boy With No Appetite



Beach at Glyfada, Greece, ~1971

It was a hot summer day on the beach in Glyfada, a suburb east of Athens, Greece. My wife and I were drying out on our towels after a brief swim in the Mediterranean. Both of us were watching with interest a little boy, busy trying to make a sand castle. It was early afternoon, what the Greeks called "Siesta Time," when they shut down businesses, have something to eat and take a nap or sometimes just hang out on the beach. The boy's mother was trying to get her son to eat something. She was carrying a bowl of tomatoes, cucumber, onion and feta cheese, following the boy back and forth from the water to his sand castle project. Every time she offered a fork with a piece of tomato or cucumber on it, the boy would turn his head in the other direction. He was clearly not hungry and interested only in his castle. After repeated attempts to get the boy to eat something, she spotted a very tall and large black man approaching and said, "Son, you better eat this tomato or I'll tell that big black man and he might eat you!" I suspect the woman wrongly assumed that the man was an American and did not speak any

Greek. The man stopped in his tracks and said, in fluent Greek with a big smile on his face, "Boy, if you're not hungry, then you don't have to eat that tomato. I'm not going to bother you." I laughed out loud, surprising both the lady and the black gentleman. I spoke with him briefly and learned that he was from South Africa and attending University in Athens.

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