

Stone Soup

There was once a man who had been travelling for a long time. He was weary, hungry, and out of food. Reaching a small village, he thought, "Maybe someone will share some food with me."

He knocked at the first house. "Could you spare a bit of food? I've travelled a long way and am very hungry."

"I'm sorry, but I have nothing to give you," the woman replied.

At the next door he asked again. The answer was the same. At every door he was turned away. No one had much to spare, and no one felt able to give any to the traveller.

But then one villager said, "All I have is some water."

"Thank you," the traveller said, smiling gratefully. "I can make stone soup from that water."

He borrowed the man's cooking pot and built a small fire. As the water started to boil, a passing villager stopped to ask what the traveller was doing.

"I'm making stone soup," the traveller replied. "Would you like to join me? First, we must add a special stone." He pulled from his knapsack a stone and dropped it into the simmering water.

Soon villagers gathered around the fire, asking questions. "What does your stone soup taste like?" asked one.

"Well, it would be better with a few onions," the traveller admitted.

"Oh, I have some onions!"

Another villager mused, "I could bring a few carrots ..."

Someone else offered, "We still have some potatoes in our garden. I'll go get them."

One by one each villager added something, and the pot bubbled with a delicious soup, enough to feed the whole village. The traveller and the villagers sat down together to enjoy the feast they'd all helped to create.

