

The Story of Stone Soup

Once upon a time, somewhere in Eastern Europe, there was a great famine. People jealously hoarded whatever food they could find, hiding it even from their friends and neighbors.

One day, a peddler drove his wagon into the village, sold a few of his wares, and began asking questions as if he planned to stay for the night. "There's not a bite to eat in the whole province," he was told. "Better keep moving on."

"Oh, I have everything I need," he said. "In fact, I was thinking of making some stone soup to share with all of you." He pulled an iron cauldron from his wagon, filled it with water, and built a fire under it. Then, with great ceremony, he drew an ordinary-looking stone from a velvet bag and dropped it into the water.

By now, hearing the rumor of food, most of the villagers had come to the square or watched from their windows in curiosity. As the peddler sniffed the "broth" and licked his lips in anticipation, hunger began to overcome their skepticism.

"Ah," the peddler said to himself rather loudly, "I do like a tasty stone soup." The peddler recalled another time when he had enjoyed stone soup with some friends. "One of them happened to have some carrots to add to the pot, and Oh how it sweetened the broth," he exclaimed.

"I may have a carrot or two," said one of the villagers. He went and fetched some from his home and put them in the pot. Others in the village soon began to recall their favorite soups. As they did, the few items tucked away in their cupboards came to mind. One after another they were off. They returned with some potatoes, onions, salt beef and so on until there was indeed a delicious meal for all.

From that day on, long after the famine had ended, they reminisced about the finest soup they had ever eaten.

The End

This story celebrates the importance of engaging and organizing resources for the common good. It's amazing what can be achieved when people are inspired and motivated to bring their resources together. Stone Soup Antiques Gallery is a cooperative antiques shop, like the villagers in this story, we have collected our treasures together to share with you.