

PRINCESS STEW  
(A Musical Fable)  
by  
Douglas Evans

NARRATOR  
Princess Stew by Douglas Evans

PRINCESS STEW MUSIC

NARRATOR  
"The princess is here!" cried the innkeeper.  
"We'll soon be rich!"  
  
"The princess is here!" cried the innkeeper's  
wife. "We'll soon be famous!"

Days before, it had been announced that the  
princess, who was traveling between her  
castles, would stop at this inn for her noonday  
meal.

Now, as the church bells struck twelve, into  
the inn walked the princess, herself, followed  
by her Maid-in-Waiting and three man servants.

CHURCH BELLS PRINCESS THEME 1

NARRATOR  
"What an honor it is to have you at our humble  
inn, Your Grace," said the innkeeper.  
  
"Your meal is ready, My Lady," said the  
innkeeper's wife. "I'll fetch it at once."

While the innkeeper's wife hustle to the  
kitchen, the innkeeper seated the princess at  
the center table. He scowled, however, when the  
Maid-in-Waiting and three man servants sat with  
her.

Soon the innkeeper's wife whisked back into the  
room. She carried a bowl of steaming hot stew  
and placed it before the princess.

"A rich, thick savory stew, My Lady," she said.  
"Prepared especially for you."

STEW THEME 1

NARRATOR  
The princess nodded. She picked up her spoon  
and dipped it into the bowl.

The innkeeper and his wife watched anxiously. They knew what delicate and refined taste buds a princess had. One kind word from her about their stew and people would come from far and wide to taste their famous fare.

The princess, however, raised the spoon to her lips and paused. "What about my servants?" she asked. "What are they to eat?"

What's this? The servants? The innkeeper and his wife exchanged glances. They hardly wanted to serve mere servants.

"Please understand, Your Grace," replied the innkeeper. "We are a poor couple. Our cupboards are almost empty. It would be a great hardship on us to feed everyone here."

The princess made no reply. Instead, she tasted the stew. The innkeeper and his wife leaned forward to catch any complimentary word she might utter.

Slowly the princess licked her lips with the tip of her tongue. She turned toward her Maid-in-Waiting and whispered in her ear. In turn the maid said, "The princess declares this stew...needs salt."

#### SALT THEME 1

##### NARRATOR

"More salt," said the first man servant.

"Needs salt" the second man servant said.

"Not enough salt," the third man servant added.

The innkeeper retrieved the stew bowl. "We'll add more salt at once," he said.

The innkeeper and his wife raced to the kitchen. A moment later they returned with the salted stew.

#### STEW THEME 2

##### NARRATOR

The princess took a small taste and puckered her lips. "Oh dear. Oh my," she said.

She turned toward her Maid-in-Waiting and whispered in her ear.

This time the maid announced, "The princess says the stew... is now too salty."

"Too much salt," said the first servant.

"An overdose of salt," said the second servant.

"You over did it with the salt," the third servant added.

The innkeeper picked up the bowl. "We'll fix the stew right away, Your Grace," he said.

Then he and his wife raced back to the kitchen.

"Too salty?" said the innkeeper's wife. "Adding salt was easy. But removing salt is impossible."

"There's only one thing we can do," the innkeeper said.

He poured the stew into a large pot. Quickly he and his wife chopped up some carrots, onions, and potatoes and added them to the pot along with some broth.

#### VEGETABLE THEME 1

NARRATOR

"That will dilute the saltiness," said the innkeeper.

"Yes, the stew will be perfect," said the innkeeper's wife.

"We'll call it Princess Stew," said the innkeeper. "That's what we'll do."

Both of them grinned at the thought of the fame and fortune this meal would bring them.

#### STEW THEME 3

NARRATOR

When the innkeeper set the stew before the princess once more, she took another taste. She nodded and turned toward her Maid-in-Waiting.

"The princess says the stew is much better now," the maid said. "But a tad more salt would improve it greatly."

SALT THEME 2

NARRATOR

"A dash more salt," said the first servant.

"A touch of salt," the second servant said.

"A pinch of will do it," added the third servant.

The innkeeper and his wife were delighted. Surely they were close now. Back in the kitchen, they added the smallest dash of salt to the stew.

But, alas, when the princess tasted the stew this time, she wrinkled her nose. She reached for a water goblet and took a long drink of water.

"The princess says the stew is again far too salty," announced the Maid-in-Waiting.

"Much too salty," said the first servant.

"Much, much, too salty," said the second servant.

"Way too much salt," the third servant added.

Back into the kitchen again rushed the innkeeper and his wife. They poured the stew into a larger pot. They added more carrots, onions, potatoes, and broth.

"Oh, how famous and rich we'll soon be," they told each other.

VEGETABLE THEME 2

NARRATOR

Soon the princess was sampling the stew again. After one small sip she whispered to the Maid-in-Waiting.

STEW THEME 4

The Maid raised a finger. "Almost," she said. "But it surely needs more salt. Just a touch perhaps."

SALT THEME 3

NARRATOR

"More salt," said the first servant.

"Please add salt," said the second servant.

The third servant was about to speak, but before he could the innkeeper grabbed the stew bowl and headed toward the kitchen.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten grains of salt were all the innkeeper and his wife added to the stew this time. But as before, the princess took one tiny taste and the Maid-in-Waiting announced, "Too salty."

"Too too salty," said Servant One.

"Too too too salty," said Servant Two.

"Tooooo salty," Servant Three added.

"Whatever," said the innkeeper.

Back in the kitchen once more, he dumped the stew into a big kettle.

"The princess and her fickle taste buds are driving me batty!" he said.

He added more carrots, onions, and potatoes to the kettle.

VEGETABLE THEME 3

NARRATOR

The innkeeper's wife added more broth to the pot. "But once we get the combination right, everyone will come to our inn to try our excellent dish," she said.

"All the people in the kingdom will come to taste our *Princess Stew*," said the innkeeper.

STEW THEME 5

NARRATOR

Once more the princess tried the stew. She took another taste...then another! The innkeeper and his wife were overjoyed. Breathlessly they waited for her to speak.

The princess set down her spoon. This time she spoke directly to the innkeeper and his wife.

"I believe now there is enough stew in your pot to feed my servants," she said. "Would you bring four bowls for them at once?"

PRINCESS THEME 2

NARRATOR

The innkeeper and his wife exchanged looks. Those were not the words they had expected to hear. But how could they refuse the request?

As everyone ate, the innkeeper and his wife waited for a good word from the princess. But she ate in silence. She finished her bowl of stew without saying another word.

PRINCESS STEW MUSIC

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