

Story 9. Cupine's Party



One day Happypotamus had a huge party for her five friends. Her friends ate enough for today and possibly tomorrow as well.

That night the animals slept well except Cupine. His stomach was full, he was happy and tired but he could not sleep. Something was worrying him. In the middle of the night, just as the moon was rising, he sat up in bed and said, "I know! It's always Happypotamus who has such huge parties. I'm going to have an even bigger party. I'm going to make the food. I'm going to invite my friends. I can do it. I will do it."

Next morning he was at the supermarket waiting for the doors to open.

For a whole hour he walked up and down the aisles plucking food from the shelves. To reach the high shelves he would climb up on the trolley. It was tiring work but eventually he had all that he needed. He had just enough money to pay the bill.

As soon as he was home, Cupine went straight to the kitchen and started to cook. Bags of food and recipe books were all over the place, on the floor and even on his bed.

With the recipe book propped up on the bench he started on Geelaugh's party food. Lettuce soup, cabbage sandwiches and the very finest of celery flavoured lemonade.

Choosing party food for Wombrot was easy but making it was hard. Chocolate soup was hard to make. And then the chocolate cake - three layers high each layer supported by milk chocolate cream with peppermint chips. The top was sprinkled with chocolate buttons. What could be tastier? Chocolate flavoured milk was easy to make but Cupine didn't rush. He wanted it to be perfect.

For Crocosmile he made the most exquisite fish and chips followed by frog jelly. That recipe was also hard but Cupine managed to get it right. And what would Crocosmile drink? Tadpole tea of course.

Two meals to go. For Dog he made a double strength meat stew. Using the most expensive flour, Cupine made twenty juicy, crunchy dog biscuits. He knew that Dog's favourite drink was water so he bought two bottles of the most expensive mountain filtered snow melt water imported directly from Bitzerland.

Now he had to cook for Happypotamus. Her favourite food was grass. Lots of it. There weren't many recipes for grass and there weren't many varieties of grass in the supermarket. But what there was he bought. He bought it all and soon he had grass soup boiling on the stove, grass pudding cooking in the oven and grass flavoured cider brewing away in his shed.

At last. All done. All finished. Nothing left over. All had been turned into beautiful food for his five very special friends. But wait. Something was wrong. Something was missing. He had forgotten that HE was coming to the party. He had no food for himself.

"Never mind," he said. "I'll find something in my cupboard. "Maybe baked beans on toast. But really it doesn't matter. I'll be too busy to eat. I'll be serving my friends."

"I'll invite them first thing in the morning," he said as he turned out the light. He closed his eyes and sniffed in the smell of the food. "Wonderful, all my good work. Magnificent. What a great party we'll have tomorrow."

Early next morning, Cupine went to the phone. He called Dog first. "This afternoon, I'm having a party. A huge party. I've made lots of juicy food. I've made your favourite food."

"Sorry," replied the Dog Taw. "Can't come to your party today. I've bought some new medicines and I must put them in bottles. Have a lovely time. Goodbye."

Cupine felt sad as he put down the phone. "But I still have four more friends. I can still have a good party."

Next he phoned Crocosmile who replied, "Sorry. Can't come to your party today. I have sold my motorbike and I'm collecting a new bike this afternoon. Have a lovely time. Goodbye."

Cupine was worried but he thought, "Three will still be fine. I'll phone Geelaugh next."

"Sorry," Geelaugh replied. "Can't come to your party today. I have to pick up my new lilac coloured car this afternoon. Have a lovely time. Goodbye."

Only two friends left but Cupine was sure that Happypotamus would come and he knew for certain that Wombrat would be there to eat the chocolate cake. So again he picked up the phone.

"Sorry," said Happypotamus. "Can't come to your party today. I have to plant seeds in my vegetable garden this afternoon. Have a lovely time. Goodbye."

Cupine was sad but he was sure that Wombrat would come. Together they would eat all the food. He phoned Wombrat.

"Wombrat, I'm having a party this afternoon. I've made some special chocolate soup and a very special chocolate cake," said Cupine.

“Sorry,” replied Wombrat. “Can’t come to your party today. I have to tidy my secret food cupboards. Have a lovely time. But send me the chocolate cake. Goodbye.”

Poor Cupine. He was almost crying he was so sad. What would he do? What would he do with all that beautiful food? “I can’t keep it. It will rot. What can I do?”

Cupine sat for a while staring at all the food neatly laid out on the table. The white table cloth, the serviettes, party hats and the place names all looked perfect. But no friends – no party. A party can’t look good - it has to have friends to make it good.

Now our six animals weren’t the only animals that lived on the island. They were the special animals – the ones who could talk. There were many less fortunate animals. So Cupine decided, “I will go out into the streets and lanes and invite those animals to the party. Many have no homes. They sleep on the streets. They beg for their food”

So he went out into the streets and lanes and said to the mice and the rats, the snakes and the lizards, the ants, the beetles and the spiders - “Come to my banquet. Come now. There’s lots to eat and you are all very welcome.”

So those poor animals came and had the best food they had ever eaten. They ate everything and drank all the drinks. They particularly liked the chocolate cake. It was a very happy party. Nothing was left. It was the best party ever.

Happy Cupine.

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Source Notes and Discussion

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Parable of the Great Banquet: Luke 14: 16 - 24

The parable is a warning not to be so preoccupied with meaningless activities that we turn our backs on the things that are important. Children are growing up in a world where things are seen as being more important than relationships, particularly a relationship with God. Encourage children to find time for others and to make their relationship with God the first priority.