

Carrots, Eggs or Coffee

A young woman went to her grandmother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved, a new one would pop up.

Her grandmother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire, and soon the pots came to boil. In the first pot she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let them sit and boil; without saying a word. In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her granddaughter, she asked, "Tell me what you see."

"Carrots, eggs, and coffee," she replied. Her grandmother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. The grandmother then asked the granddaughter to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard boiled egg. Finally, the grandmother asked the granddaughter to sip the coffee. The granddaughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma then asked,

"What does it mean, grandmother?"

Her grandmother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity: boiling water. Each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard, and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

"Which are you?" she asked her granddaughter.