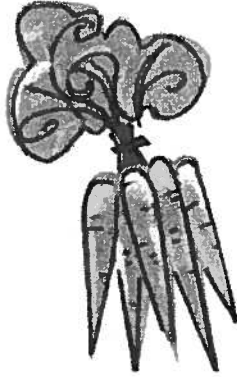


# A Carrot, An Egg and A Cup of Coffee

A young woman went to her mother 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 arose.



Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the water came to boil. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let

them 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.

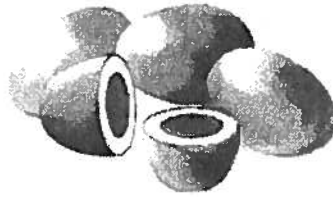
Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?"

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

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity, the 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 in 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 daughter.

"When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?" Which are you? Are you the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity do you wilt and become soft and lose your strength? Are you the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did you have a fluid spirit, but after a death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have you become hardened and stiff? Does your shell look the same, but on the inside are you bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and hardened heart? Or are you like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better. You change the situation around you. When the hour is the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate yourself to another level? How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?



May you have enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human, and enough hope to make you happy. The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of

everything; they just make the most of everything that comes their way.

When you were born, you cried and everyone around you smiled. Live your life so at the end, you're the one who is smiling and everyone around you is crying. Cherish those who mean something to you; those who have touched your life in one way or another; those who make you smile when you really need it; and those who make you see the brighter side of things.

