

**Once there was a poor village filled with people who did not like to talk to each other or to share their things. They locked their doors and windows tight and kept what little food they had to themselves.**



One day, a stranger passed through the village. He was very tired and hungry from his journey. He stopped at the first house and knocked on the door, hoping there was food inside. A woman opened the door only a tiny crack, "Who are you?" the woman asked the stranger.



"I am a tired and hungry traveller," he responded. "Please may I have something to eat?"

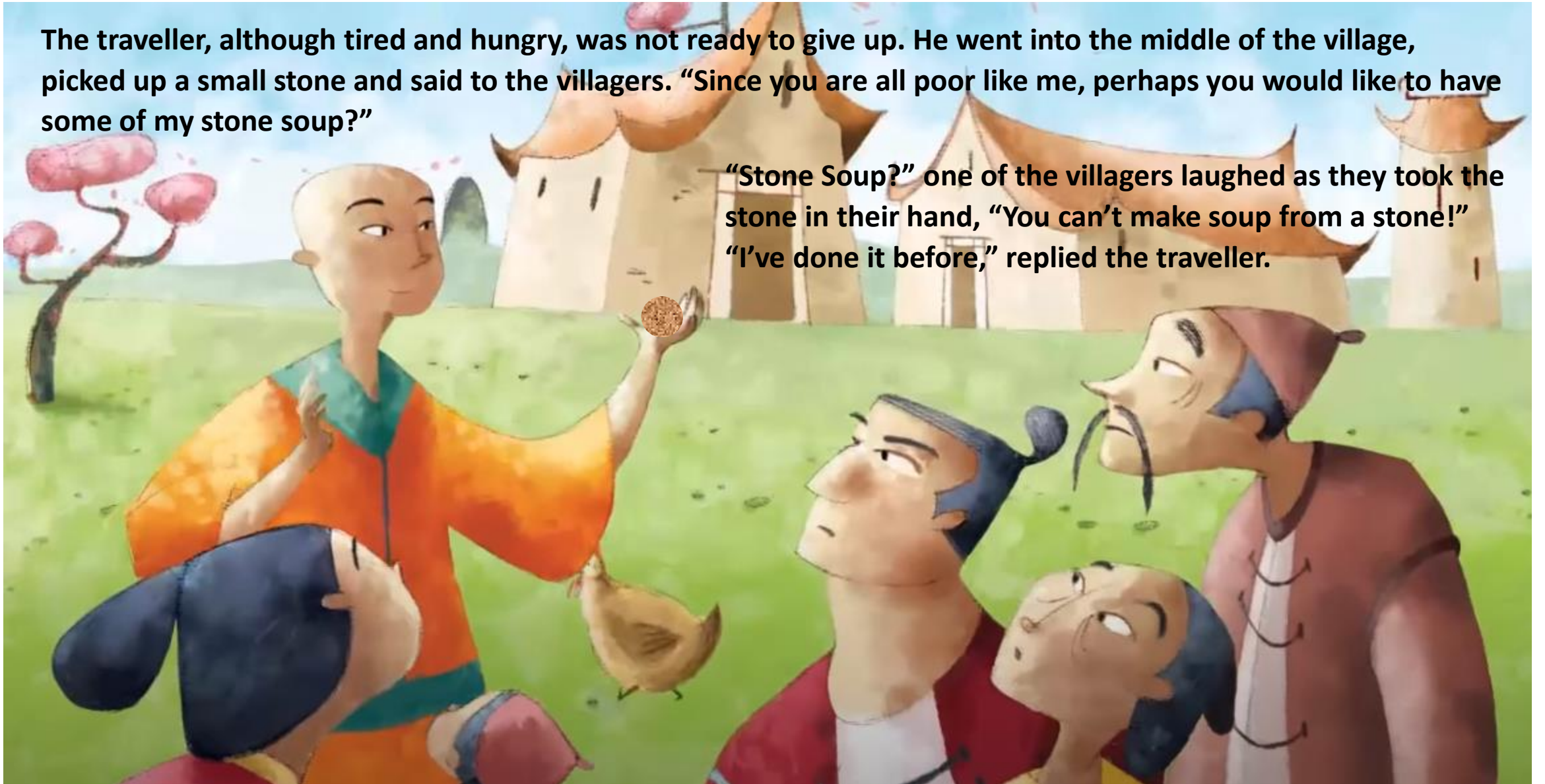
"There is hardly any food here," said the woman. "In fact, I doubt you will find anyone in the whole village who has any food to spare."



**And she was right. Every door the traveller knocked on said the same thing. None of them had any food that they could share.**

The traveller, although tired and hungry, was not ready to give up. He went into the middle of the village, picked up a small stone and said to the villagers. "Since you are all poor like me, perhaps you would like to have some of my stone soup?"

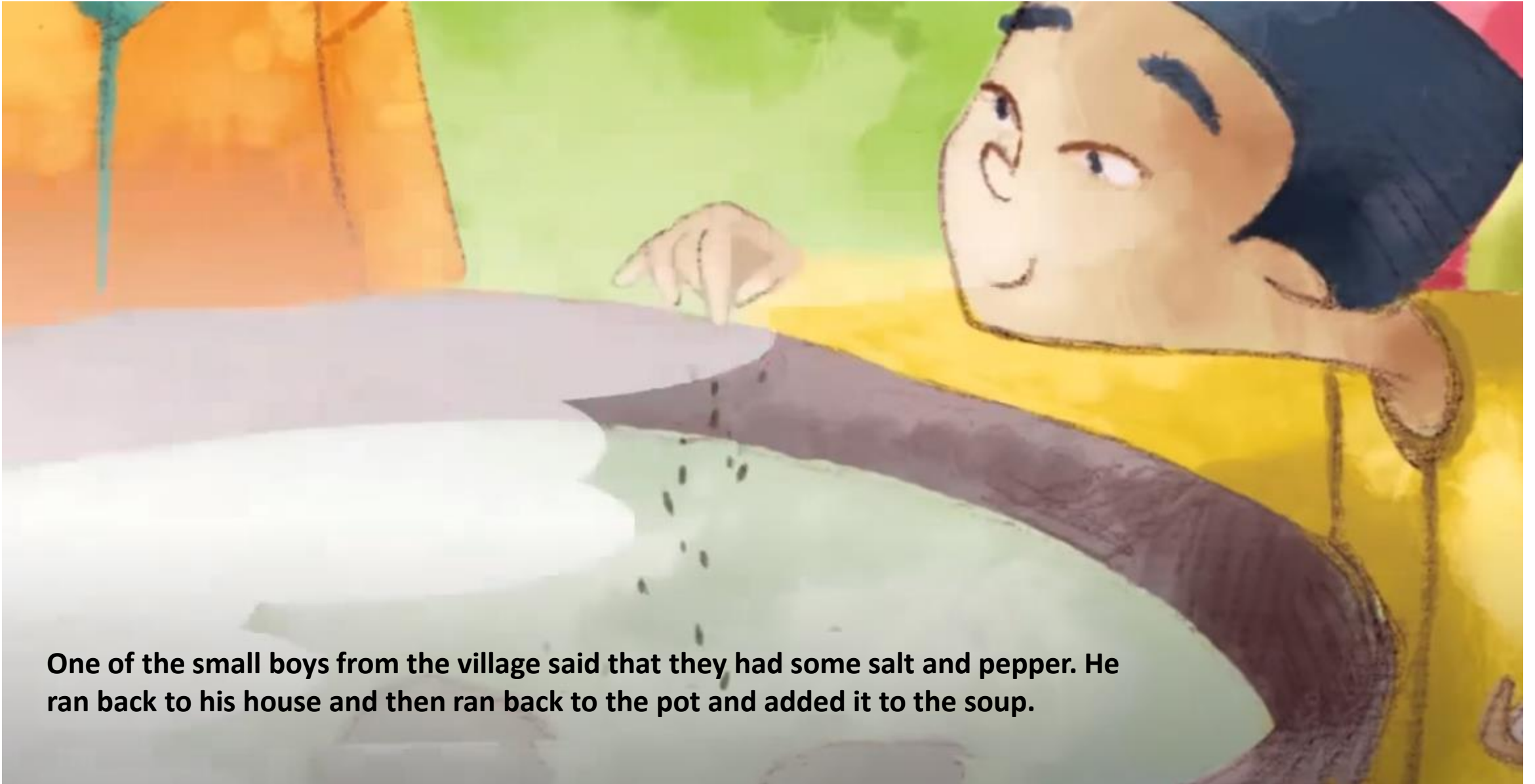
"Stone Soup?" one of the villagers laughed as they took the stone in their hand, "You can't make soup from a stone!" "I've done it before," replied the traveller.



The villagers had never seen anyone make soup from a stone before, but since they were hungry too, they invited him to stay. One of the villagers lit a fire and said they had a large pot that he could use to make the stone soup in. They dragged it down to the middle of the village, laughing to themselves, as they did not believe the stranger at all. The traveller placed the stone inside the pot and another villager poured water on to. They waited for it to boil.



Then the traveller sipped a spoonful of hot liquid. "It's almost done," he said. "But if you had just a little salt and pepper, the soup would taste so much better."



**One of the small boys from the village said that they had some salt and pepper. He ran back to his house and then ran back to the pot and added it to the soup.**

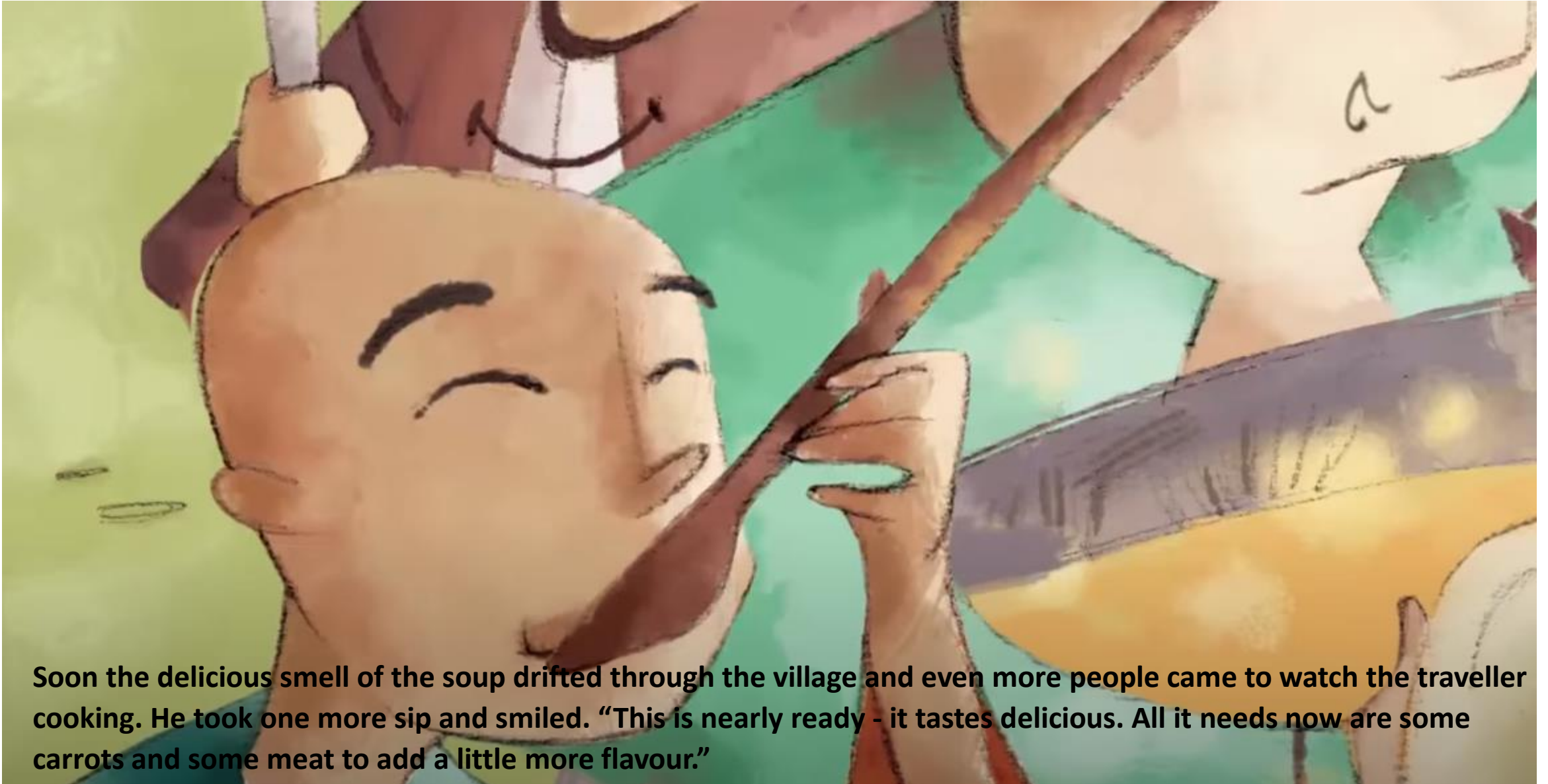
**“It’s almost finished,” the traveller assured them as he tasted another spoonful. “But it would be even nicer with a few potatoes.”**



**A hungry villager jumped up and said that he had some spare potatoes at home. He ran and fetched them and soon they were added to the soup.**





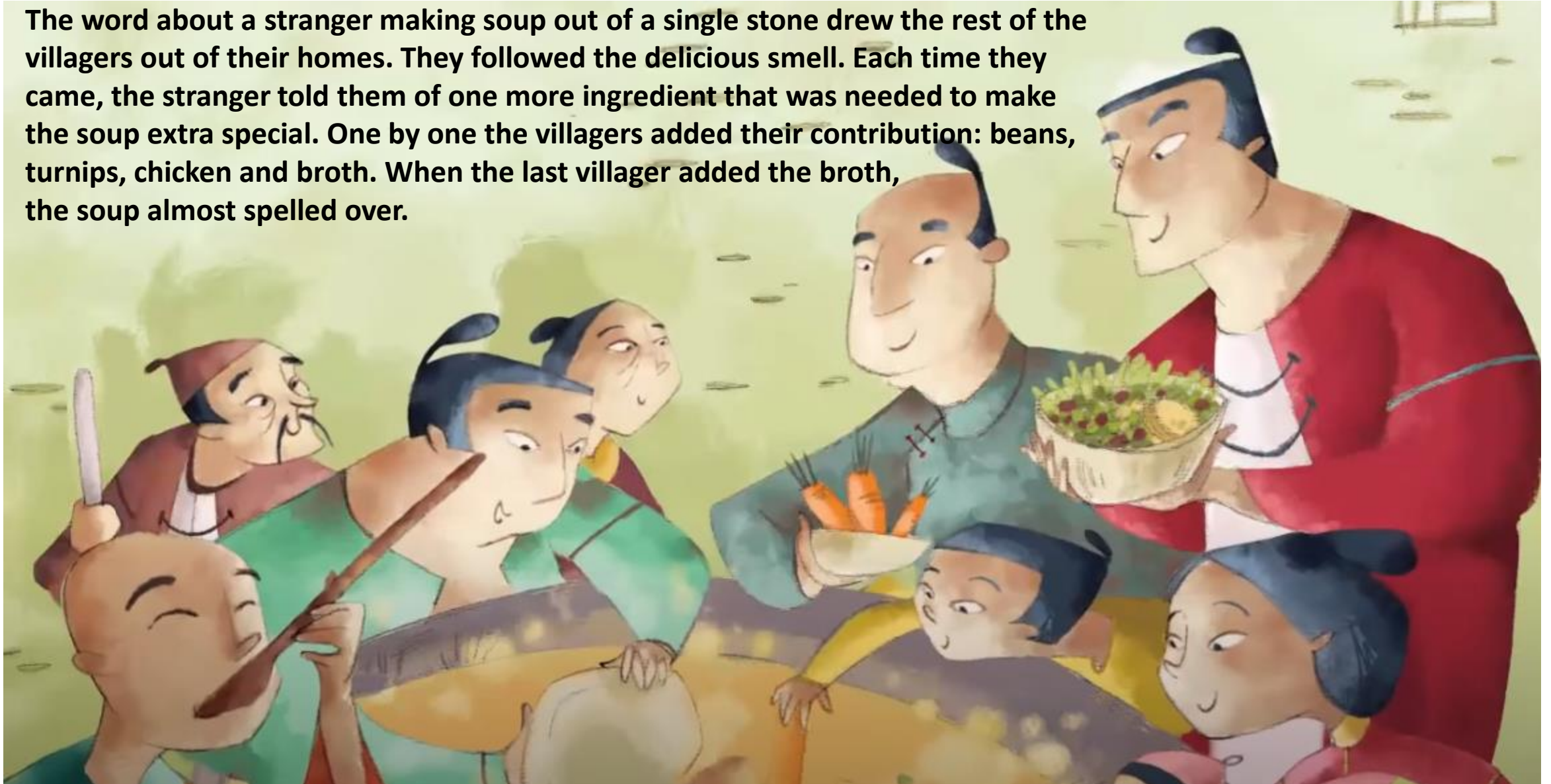


**Soon the delicious smell of the soup drifted through the village and even more people came to watch the traveller cooking. He took one more sip and smiled. "This is nearly ready - it tastes delicious. All it needs now are some carrots and some meat to add a little more flavour."**



**A few more villagers jumped up and ran back to their houses. Some added carrots and some meat and one villager even added some onions.**

The word about a stranger making soup out of a single stone drew the rest of the villagers out of their homes. They followed the delicious smell. Each time they came, the stranger told them of one more ingredient that was needed to make the soup extra special. One by one the villagers added their contribution: beans, turnips, chicken and broth. When the last villager added the broth, the soup almost spilled over.



The traveller lifted the spoon to taste it. "Perfect!" he exclaimed. Then, he served a bowl of stone soup for every one of the villagers to taste.

"It's magic!" the villagers cried out, seeing how much soup he had made.





**“Delicious!” cried another villager. “But where can we get a magic stone from? Surely this one has now been used up.”**

**The traveller shook his head and pulled the stone out of the pot. The stone was still whole! The villagers realised that the delicious and plentiful soup did not come from the stone, it had come from them working together as a community.**

