



# *The Guest*

A Treasury Of Eskimo Tales

North American

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*Intermediate*  
*2 min read*

An old hag lived in a house with her grandson. She was a very bad woman who thought of nothing but playing mischief. She was a witch and tried to harm everybody with witchcraft.

One time a stranger came to visit some friends who lived in a house near the old woman. The visitor was a fine hunter and went out with his host every morning and they brought home a great deal of game. It made the old woman envious to see her neighbor have so much to eat, while she had little, and she determined to kill the visitor.

She made a soup of wolf's and man's brains, which was the most poisonous food she could think of. Then she sent her grandson to invite the stranger to eat supper at her house.

"Tell him that I desire to be polite to the guest of my neighbor, but be sure you do not tell him what I have cooked."

The boy went to the neighboring hut and said, "Stranger, my grandmother invites you to come to her hut and have a good feast on a supper that she has cooked. She told me not to say that it is a wolf's and a man's brains, and I do not say it."

The man thought a moment, and then replied, "Tell your grandam that I will come."

He went to the hut where the old woman pretended to be very glad to see him. They sat down at the table and while she was placing a large dish of soup before him, he put a bowl on the floor between his feet. He excused himself for putting his hand before his mouth because his front teeth were gone, and every time he poured the spoonful into the bowl.

When he had finished he said, "It is the custom in my tribe to bring your hostess a bit of some delicious food to show that you appreciate her hospitality. Here is a bowl of rare food which I give to you, but it will not be good unless you eat it at once."

He gave the soup to the old witch, and the moment she tasted the broth she herself had prepared she fell down dead.

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