Name: _____ Date: _____

# The Kind Old Pair

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 314 words

In a town in the hills, the people never shared. When a stranger came, they shut their doors.

One evening, two tired travelers came down the road. They tried one house after another. No one opened up.

Up the hill stood a little hut. Philemon lived there with his wife, Baucis. They were old and poor.

The two travelers knocked at the little door. "Please come in," said Philemon. "Our supper is plain, but it is yours."

Baucis lit the fire and set a pot to boil. Philemon picked cabbage from the garden. They wanted their guests to rest.

The table had a short leg, so it wobbled. Baucis put a bit of broken pot under it. Then she set out eggs, cheese and honey.

Philemon filled a cup with milk from an old jug. He filled it again, and again. The jug was never empty!

The old pair looked at each other. They looked at their guests. Their hands began to tremble.

The tall one smiled. "I am Zeus, and this is Hermes. We came to see who was kind."

The pair had one goose. They wanted to serve her, but she hid behind Zeus. He laughed and said, "Keep her."

"Come and climb," said Zeus. The old pair went up, step by step. When they looked back, the water had risen.

The town was gone. A lake lay shining in the moonlight. But the old pair were safe.

Then their little house began to change. Its walls turned to white stone. Its roof turned to gold.

It was a temple of shining stone! "Ask for anything," said Zeus kindly.

"We would like to look after this place," said Philemon. "And we never want to be apart." The gods nodded, and they were gone.

Years went by. One morning, the pair became two trees, side by side. Their leaves whisper in the wind.

## Questions

**1. Why were the travelers sad?**

A. They lost a goose
B. Every door stayed shut
C. They were lost

**2. Who lived in the tiny house?**

A. Philemon and Baucis
B. Zeus and Hermes
C. A king and queen

**3. What was strange about the jug?**

A. It was made of gold
B. It would not pour
C. It never ran out of milk

**4. Why were the old pair safe?**

A. They lived by a lake
B. They had been kind to the travelers
C. They had a goose

**5. The old pair's hands began to tremble. What does "tremble" mean?**

A. Shake a little
B. Sing
C. Fall asleep

**6. What does the story show about sharing?**

A. Only rich people can share
B. Strangers must stay away
C. Even a poor home can give a good welcome

## Words to know

travelers: wanderers
wobbled: rocked
temple: god's house
whisper: speak softly

# Answer key: The Kind Old Pair

1. B. Every door stayed shut
2. A. Philemon and Baucis
3. C. It never ran out of milk
4. B. They had been kind to the travelers
5. A. Shake a little
6. C. Even a poor home can give a good welcome