

Soup

A continuation of “The Tale of Despereaux” written by Kate DiCamillo.

Pitter-patter. Despereaux Tilling hurried down the royal stairs. He was smaller than any other mouse. Even so, he did save the princess from a jealous servant and a light hungry rat in the endless dungeon below the castle. But that, reader, is another story. Anyways, our little mouse was heading to the royal kitchen. As stealthy as a ninja, Despereaux approached the smells that permeated the kitchen. Then, he heard her.

“Despereaux!” shouted Princess Pea. “I’m so glad you’re here!”

“We’ve been waiting forever!” complained Roscuro.

Despereaux made his apologies as he beheld the blond princess in her satin green dress. Roscuro sat on the table next to her. Roscuro, a rat, had a mangled appearance, brown fur, and a stump where his tail had been.

“Oh dear!” cried Pea. “I’ve forgotten the most important ingredient. Despereaux, Roscuro, you two start without me. I’ve already prepared the boiling water.”

As the Princess hurried down the hall, Despereaux climbed up the table where Roscuro was waiting impatiently.

“So...” said Despereaux as he began reading the recipe book. Yes reader, he could read. “We’ll need one cup of oil, half an onion...”

They then set to work preparing and cutting the needed ingredients. The task was challenging and soon left them exhausted. But, they persisted and drove on to the next step.

“How are we supposed to put all this food into the boiling pot of water?” questioned Roscuro.

Despereaux pondered the question for a moment. Then an idea sprang into the midst of his thoughts.

“I think I have an idea,” he mused.

Their adventure began when the two little rodents set off dragging bits of food up, up, and up the massive stack of recipe books and into the

pot. As a result, the strenuous effort took the remnants of their strength. But after several rounds of hard labor, they prevailed. Soon, the pot had an enticing aroma that filled their noses with glorious scents and smells. It smelled so sweet, so perfectly salty. The smell nearly made them fall into a dreamy peaceful sleep.

“We’re finally finished!” Roscuro let out a sigh of relief.

Then he plopped down to sit and relax as if he hadn’t a care in the world.

“We’re not done yet!” reminded Despereaux.

They were done, all except for the mixing. This would be the most difficult part of their adventure. They considered the issue for a moment and agreed to stack another book at the already towering heap of books. At first, everything went well. But a few minutes after they had begun stirring, Roscuro fell.

“Ahh!” Roscuro screamed.

Fortunately he fell onto the metal mixing spoon. Unfortunately, metal is quite hot when it is in a boiling pot of water. Despereaux raced to think of a way to save his friend. Then, he spotted a spool of red yarn.

“Catch!” he yelled.

Despereaux tossed the yarn into Roscuro’s paws.

Roscuro grabbed hold of the red yarn. Despereaux pulled on the yarn with all his might. Roscuro’s eyes filled with fear and trepidation. But Despereaux’s paws started to sweat and slip. He couldn’t hold on for much longer and Roscuro was about to fall! And reader, you read right, Roscuro was about to fall into the boiling broth! They almost lost hope. Until...

“Despereaux? Roscuro?”

Pea rushed into the kitchen. She scooped Roscuro out of the boiling broth with her bare hands. Though it cost her a burn.

“My, what a wonderful soup you’ve made,” she exclaimed. “Now for the final touch!”

She added a sprig of rosemary to the center of the soup.

“Now, let’s bring this masterpiece to the party!”

They sauntered into the banquet hall where there was a huge celebration filled with the clammer of boisterous nobles, servants, and many other people.

“Today, we have gathered to commemorate Queen Rosemary,” boomed King Phillip. “And now, let us honor her by drinking this magnificent soup as she would’ve wanted!”

Pea placed the soup in the center while a tear slid down her face. But, when Despereaux, Pea, and Roscuro took their first sip of the delicious soup, it poured down their throats in a cascade of warmth, love, and light. It felt so good that big smiles bloomed on their faces as it did on everyone else’s . The mouse, the rat, and the princess all thought the same thing. Everything they did was worth it.