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THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

Once upon a time, there were three little pigs who lived happily with their mother. But one day, when they had grown a little older, Mother Pig told them it was time to go out into the world and build homes of their own.

—You are big enough now, she said kindly. —You must learn to take care of yourselves.

The three little pigs said goodbye to their mother and walked into the forest, looking for a good place to live. Each one wanted to build a house, but they did not all think the same way.

The first little pig was a bit lazy. He wanted to finish quickly so he could go and play.

—I will build a house of straw, he said. —That way I can finish very fast.

And that is what he did. He gathered a lot of straw, made his little house, and when he was done, he ran off to sing, play, and have fun.

The second little pig also wanted a house that was easy to build, though a little stronger.

—I will build a house of wood, he said. —It will take a little longer, but not too much.

So he found sticks and wooden boards, built his little house, and when he finished, he also went off to enjoy himself.

But the third little pig was hardworking and thoughtful.

—I will build a house of bricks, he said. —It will take more time, but it will be strong and safe.

His brothers looked at him and laughed a little.

—You will take forever, said the first little pig.

—While you work, we will play, added the second.

The third little pig smiled and kept working. Day after day, he placed one brick on top of another with great care. Even when he felt tired, he did not give up. He wanted a house that would protect him from danger.

One day, a big bad wolf appeared in the forest. He was hungry, and when he saw the straw house, he smiled.

—A little pig lives here, he said. —This will be a delicious meal.

The wolf walked to the door and knocked hard.

—Little pig, little pig, let me come in.

From inside, the first little pig answered in fear:

—No, no, no. I will not let you in.

Then the wolf showed his teeth and shouted:

—Then I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down.

The wolf took a deep breath and blew with all his might. The straw house began to shake. Then it moved more and more, until it fell down completely.

The first little pig ran as fast as he could. The wolf chased after him, but the little pig escaped and reached his brother's wooden house.

—Brother, brother! he cried as he ran inside. —The wolf blew down my house!

The second little pig became very frightened.

—Come in quickly, he said. —Let's close the door tight.

Soon the wolf arrived at the wooden house and knocked again.

—Little pigs, little pigs, let me come in.

The two pigs answered from inside:

—No, no, no. We will not let you in.

The wolf growled angrily.

—Then I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down.

He took a deep breath and blew very hard. The wooden house creaked. He blew again with even more force, and the little house began to shake. At the third great puff, the house came crashing down.

The two little pigs ran away, terribly afraid. The wolf chased them again, but they ran as fast as they could until they reached their brother's brick house.

—Open up, open up! they cried. —The wolf is coming after us!

The third little pig opened the door at once and let them in.

—Do not worry, he said. —My house is strong.

A little later, the wolf came, panting. He looked at the brick house and frowned.

—Little pigs, little pigs, let me come in.

All three answered from inside:

—No, no, no. We will not let you in.

The wolf, very angry, shouted:

—Then I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down.

So he blew with all his strength. But the house did not move. He blew again even harder. The house stayed firm. He blew one more time, so hard that he almost ran out of breath, but the brick house did not fall.

The wolf became very angry.

—If I cannot get in through the door, I will come in through the chimney, he said.

The three little pigs heard this and looked at one another.

—Quick, said the third little pig. —Let's put a pot of water on the fire.

The three of them worked together and placed a big pot under the chimney. The water began to heat until it was boiling.

Soon the wolf climbed onto the roof and came down the chimney very carefully. But as soon as he dropped, he fell right into the hot pot.

—Ow! Ow! Ow! cried the wolf, jumping up with a great leap.

Frightened and hurt, he shot back up the chimney and ran into the forest without looking back. He never came to bother the three little pigs again.

The two older brothers looked at the brick house and understood that their brother had been right.

—You worked hard, said the first, —and that is why your house saved us.

—Yes, said the second. —We should have been more responsible.

The third little pig smiled.

—What matters is that now we are together and safe.

From that day on, the three little pigs learned that doing things well, with patience and effort, may take more time, but it brings better results. And they lived happily, peacefully, and safely in their strong brick house.

THE END

