

So, You Think You Have It Bad

There was a woman in the mountains who went to find a guru. She had a big feast to make for the holidays that were a ways off, but first she had a problem she wanted the guru to fix. She climbed up the mountain, found the guru and said, "Guru, my mother-in-law has just moved in with us. We live in a one room hut. I have a big feast to make for the holidays coming up soon, and she will do nothing but get in my way. What am I to do? I hate my mother-in-law." The guru smiles and says, "Do you have a goat?" The woman says, "Yes, I have a goat." "Move the goat into the hut with you. Come back and see me in a week." The woman leaves, does the guru's bidding, and comes back in a week. "Guru, things did not get better. They got worse. I not only have my mother-in-law in the hut with us before the holidays, but now we have a goat. By the way, did I mention that I really hate my mother-in-law?" The guru smiles kindly and responds, "Do you have chickens?" She sniffed. "Yes, I have chickens." "Move the chickens into the hut with you. Come back and see me in a week." The beleaguered woman leaves to do the Guru's bidding. She comes back in a week. "Guru, I cannot stand it. Things are definitely worse. I now not only have my feast to prepare AND my mother-in-law --whom I hate, in the hut with us, but now we have a goat AND chickens. Did I mention that

I really, really hate my mother-in-law?" The guru smiles kindly, nods and says, "Do you have a pig?" The woman sighed. "Yes, I have a pig." "Move the pig into the hut with you. Come back and see me in a week." The befuddled woman leaves to do the Guru's bidding. She comes back in a week. "Guru, I cannot stand it. Things have gotten much worse. I now not only have my feast to prepare, my mother-in-law whom I truly hate -- I do believe I've mentioned that -- in the hut with us, but now we have a goat AND chickens AND a pig." She looked down at her feet and muttered, "I really, truly hate my mother-in-law." The guru nods and says, "Do you have kittens?" The woman sighs as her eyes dart around miserably. "Yes," she answers. "I have kittens." "Put the kittens in the hut with you. Come see me in a week." The poor, dejected woman leaves. She comes back in a week. "Guru, please. It has gotten worse and worse. Not only is the holiday coming up really soon where I have to make my feast, but I now not only have my mother-in-law, whom I cannot tell you how much I truly hate, in the hut with us, but now we have a goat AND chickens AND a pig AND kittens. I really, truly hate my mother-in-law. I am serious," she said determinedly. The guru smiles gently and says, "Do you have a dog?" The woman's eyes went up to the sky. When she found no divine help there, she took a deep breath. "Yes, I have a dog." Her shoulders shuddered at what, by now, she knew the guru would say. "Put the dog in the hut with you. Come back in a week." The poor, dejected woman leaves. She comes back in a week. "Guru, I cannot take it anymore. I have not only the big feast to prepare, but my mother-in-law whom," she clears her throat, "well, you know, and now we have a goat AND chickens AND a pig AND kittens AND a dog." She shook her head. A tear trickled down both her cheeks, because she knew the guru was going to say something dreadful. The guru smiled. "Now, take out all the animals. Come and see me in a week." The bewildered woman blinked in confusion as she left. She came back in a week. Her step was spry, her smile wide. "Helloooooo, Guru," she called before she even got to the top of the mountain. "It's a beautiful day." The guru asked, "And how is your mother-in-law, my daughter?" Her smile didn't waver as she said, "Oh, you mean that fine lady living with us? Truthfully, she is not so bad." The guru said, "You have learned much, my daughter." Sometimes, we need to KNOW we don't have it so bad, before we can begin to enjoy our lives. It's like, don't make the universe hit you over the head with a hammer, learn from the little taps it gives you.

 Thanks for reading, Jan

About the Author

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