

The Tale of One Candle

It was bitterly cold. Many friends were in Sam's house to have dinner. Sam's friends told stories and bragged about their brave deeds. Sam was soon tired of all the bragging and said, "I'm brave, but I don't brag about it."

His friends wanted Sam to prove it

Sam said, "I'll stay out in the cold all night. And I'll do it without a fire to keep warm. If I fail, I'll cook another delicious dinner for you tomorrow night."

So it was decided. Sam's friends went home. Sam stepped outside. He walked around town to keep warm. It was getting late and colder.

Sam decided to return to his street and then he saw a welcome light. There was one candle burning in a window of the house at the end of the street. Sam watched the candle all night. At last, dawn came. He went inside to get warm. Soon his friends arrived. "Well," they said, "did you do it?"

"Yes," said Sam. "I almost gave up. But then I saw a candle in a window. It kept me company."

"What?" cried his friends. "Then you *did* brag! A candle makes heat!"

"That's silly," said Sam. "It was far off. Besides, it was inside."

His friends insisted that he owed them dinner. A candle, after all, does give off heat. At last Sam agreed.

They came back that night for dinner and they waited a long time.

Finally, Sam led them to the kitchen. They stared at a big cooking pot hanging from the ceiling. They looked at the candle on the floor beneath it. Then they all started to laugh. Sam laughed, too.

"I'm sorry the cooking takes so long," he said. "But it will surely be done soon. I know that a candle gives off heat. Didn't you tell me that this morning?"