

The Magic Pebble

Close your eyes and think of a mountain. It's the highest mountain you've ever seen. What would it be like to stand on the very top?. Let's see if you can find out...

Look! There's a narrow, stony trail that winds its way through tall trees glistening with dew. Beyond the treetops you can see the peak of the mountain towering above you. The mountain looks beautiful and grand. It shimmers in the morning sun. You want to climb it. But you're not sure how you'll do it.

But wait! Someone's standing on the path in front of you. Perhaps he knows how to get to the top? His legs are skinny and his bare feet look rough and scarred from walking in the mountains. You gaze into his face. His skin is wrinkled like old leather, but his soft, green eyes look at you kindly.

"I'm the Mountain Man and I'll guide you", he says gently. "The mountain looks high but you can reach the top if you try". He asks you to follow him. At first the path is level and you walk on easily. But soon it becomes steeper, then even steeper. It's hard to keep up with the Mountain Man.

Now you feel hot and out of breath. Sweat trickles down your face and your legs feel heavy, very heavy. The top of the mountain seems a long way away. How will you ever make it?

The Mountain Man stops and takes a big, round pebble from his pocket and puts it into your hand. "It's a magic pebble," he explains. "Whenever you think you can't get to the top, hold it tightly and believe that you can."

You continue along the steep path, following the course of a gurgling stream. There are stepping stones across the stream. You watch as the Mountain Man skips lightly from stone to stone, but you're too afraid to follow. The stones are slippery and far apart and you think you'll fall into the icy water.

"Remember the pebble," calls out the Mountain Man from the far side of the stream. Tightly you hold the pebble. Suddenly you feel a burst of energy and you aren't afraid any more. You feel brave and confident as you leap from stone to stone across the rushing water. Soon you're near the top of the mountain, above the trees.

On hands and knees you climb, pulling yourself up over giant boulders. Just when you feel too exhausted to carry on, you squeeze the pebble once more.

And all at once, you feel the cool breeze on your face. You've reached the top! You're on the roof of the world. You've conquered the mountain. Look! Look at that view! Far, far below you, WHAT CAN YOU SEE?