

# The Humble Mayor of Grumble

In the little old town of Grumble, the Grumblers grumbled about everything.

They grumbled about the weather, they grumbled about this and that and they grumbled about each other. They even grumbled about their little old Mayor, The Mayor of Grumble.

They thought grumbling would make them feel happier. But it never did.

Grumbling just made them grumble even more.

The Grumblers took some things in life for granted.

Many wasted food.

Many dropped litter.

Many didn't appreciate the beauty of the park and the buildings.

Until the Silent Visitor came to town.

The day the Silent Visitor came to the little old Town of Grumble life changed.

The Silent Visitor was invisible.

It stalked the Grumblers and touched them lightly and then vanished. The Grumblers, the Silent Visitor touched, became sick, really sick.

The little old Mayor of Grumble was worried.

"We are at war with a virus," he said.

He ordered the Grumblers to stay in their homes, lock their doors, board up their windows and stay put. They could lean out of their windows or step into their gardens, if they had them, for a breath of fresh air but nothing more.

The little old Mayor of Grumble closed all the schools and all the offices. He cancelled the fairs and the football matches. Yet some of the Grumblers were needed to help and the little old Mayor of Grumble was grateful to all the helpers on the front line.

He was deeply grateful for the shelf stackers, delivery drivers, food providers and those who cared for the sick.

He was deeply grateful for the cleaners, teachers, the carers, the farmers and food providers and all the volunteers, for they all risked their lives to help others.

And he was also grateful to all the children who painted rainbows of hope.

Then the Silent Visitor touched the little old Mayor of Grumble and he became sick! The Town Hall became a field hospital and he was cared for there.



Once a week the Grumblers stood on their doorsteps, or leaned out of their windows to clap together, as a mark of appreciation for those who were helping.

But the Silent Visitor had not gone away and the Grumblers felt that they were living in a broken world.

So it was some surprise when, over time, many of the Grumblers gradually realised that it was the simple pleasures in life that made them truly happy.

They started to enjoy cooking, making things, gardening, telling stories, singing, dancing, reading, thinking, talking and just being together.

The little old Town of Grumble, once full of rubbish and pollution, was waking up again. Fish returned to the streams, birds sang in the trees and fox cubs sat at the side of leafy lanes where ladybirds danced. Lanes were now laced by delicate flowers where honeybees and bumblebees hovered and dolphins swam into the shores.

There were still times when the Grumblers were frightened of the Silent Visitor though. The little old Mayor of Grumble thought about this and then he sent them a message from his hospital bed. He said:

"When you are frightened, just think about the helpers. Look at the helpers. There are always people helping."

After a few months, and with no Grumblers to touch, the Silent Visitor melted away. The little old Mayor of Grumble recovered and announced that the town was now safe.

The Grumblers stepped out of their homes and danced in the sunshine. Gradually life returned to normal in the little old town of Grumble. But, the Grumblers found their lives were never quite the same again for many had found a way of living that made them happier, so happy in fact that the little old Mayor of Grumble renamed the town,

The Grand Old Town of Humble.

## The End.



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