

Royal Broth



BY EDEL WIGNELL

In the kitchen at the palace there were chefs a-plenty
For the King's Royal Banquet for a hundred and twenty;
"We'll begin with a broth that is strong, rich and rare,
A broth so superb, it's beyond all compare."

Now the chefs were energetic, each strong on innovation,
And ideas flowed fast for individual creation.
"I've a great minestrone!" and "Chowder's far the best!"
"My cock-a-leekie's fine!" and "Vichyssoise, I suggest!"

Not one chef would compromise; ingredients were sliced,
They were grated and sauteed, peeled, crushed and diced,
And all thrown together: turtle, chicken, beef,
With vegetables and noodles, stock and bay leaf.

There were oysters, shanks and cheeses, snails and duck's liver,
And witchetty grubs flown frozen from Australia.
It was ready at last for His Majesty's sip,
So he put in the ladle and took a great dip.

The King had a taste and his face turned magenta;
"I wanted Royal Broth, not a hotchpotched polenta!
It's very clear to me," — his mouth began to froth —
"There are too many cooks and they're spoiling the broth!"

"He'll cut back the team!" The chefs began to quake.
"Some will be redundant! Oh, for goodness sake!"
But the chief spoke up quickly, "I'll see that it's done
In true teamwork fashion, assembly-line run."

"Five chop the onions! You kill the cock!
Two pound the herbs! Ten make the stock!
All work together in a smooth operation
Thank you all very much for your cooperation."

The broth soon was ready, and the king came again,
He tasted it and said, "Congratulations, then!
I'm glad to say I've changed my mind; it's plain enough to see
That 'Many hands make light work' is good philosophy."

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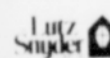
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