

Dragon killers

Many years ago in the hills of Patagonia there was a village. Its inhabitants were starving. They lived in fear of a dragon that they had seen in their fields and they would not go to harvest their crops.

One day a traveller came to the village and asked for food. They explained that there was none because they were afraid of the dragon. The traveller was brave and offered to slay the dragon. When he arrived at the fields he couldn't see a dragon, only a large water melon. So he returned to the village and said, "You have nothing to fear; there is no dragon, only a large water melon." The villagers were angry at his refusal to understand their fear and hacked the traveller to pieces.

Some weeks later another traveller came to the village. Again, when he asked for food he was told about the dragon. He too was brave and offered to kill the dragon. The villagers were relieved and delighted. When he arrived at the fields he also saw the giant water melon and returned to the village to tell the villagers that they were mistaken about the dragon – they need have no fear of a giant water melon. They hacked him to pieces.

More time passed and the villagers were becoming desperate. One day a third traveller appeared. He could see how desperate they were and asked what the problem was. They told him and he promised he would slay the dragon so that they could go to the fields to harvest their crops. When he got to the field he too saw the giant water melon. He reflected for a moment, then he drew his sword, leaped into the field, and hacked the water melon to pieces. He returned to the village and told them he had killed their dragon. They were overjoyed. The traveller stayed in the village for many months, long enough to teach the villagers the difference between dragons and water melons.