



Thanksgiving

WE ARE GRATEFUL

The First Winter for the Homeless

In 1620, religious separatists crossed the Atlantic on the Mayflower. Their objective was to find new land, reserving spots for the building new homes, where they could freely practice their faith. After 66 days, they arrived in New England, America where the Wampanoag tribe greeted them. There, they attempted to build the Plymouth Colony.

Division and Distorted Views

Because the natives' ways were different, the separatists viewed them as savages. Thus, in attempts to enforce civilization upon their people, the settlers faced rejection. As result they escalated to brutal decimation of everything, stealing and abusing resources, food, and land. The natives pleaded, begging for **respect**, the replacement of crops, responsibility of food preservation, and avoiding unnecessary killing. They warned of the coming harsh winters. Yet, despite these appeals, the separatists continued their exploitation. Winter arrived with consequences. **Famine** came first leaving the separatists with no access to food. They were **dehydrated, malnourished, and severely ill**, which resulted in a grim death toll of over 50% of their people. Those who survived suffered from physical and mental diseases. And as winter persisted, the desperation for food and healing remedies drove them to beg the Wampanoag tribe for help, but they were refused.

Forgiveness and Compassion

Spring arrived and the Wampanoag tribe finally decided to extend their aid. Through the negotiations of an escaped slave named Squanto, they **generously shared knowledge of survival, lifestyle** and **farming; teaching how to grow food, acquire resources, and sustain**.

Gratitude and Unification

In the Autumn of 1621, the settlers saw their first harvest. After being shown how to be grateful and unified, they **expressed return gratitude** by organizing a 3-day feast, to **symbolize unity** and appreciation for the Wampanoag tribe's assistance. In turn, the natives arrived with five freshly hunted deer.

What was on the Menu of the First Thanksgiving?

On the table the settlers displayed the foods they had successfully grown: **leafy greens, squash, berries, corn, and legumes (beans/peas)**. However, today our tribute for this dinner contradicts the historical story, featuring ultra-processed foods, sugary treats, and artificial high-carbohydrate concoctions. As well, instead of gratitude people are **demanding** and **selfish**. This way of "being" brings about the very diseases the Native Americans and Europeans fought to prevent, thereby dishonoring the purpose of this remembrance. So, today let's honor this treaty by being thankful, eating natural foods, and aim to become unified.

