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## Maria's Beautiful Bowls

Maria Montoya Martinez is a famous potter. Her name and work are known around the world. This is her story. Maria grew up in an American Indian village. It is the kind of village that is called pueblo. A long time ago the Native Americans there made a great deal of pottery. They made bowls, pots and bowls. They painted them with handsome designs. They made all the pots they used. Their work was very fine.

As time passed, they began to buy some of the things they needed. They bought pans to cook in and glass jars to store food in. They made fewer pots than they had made before, so there were fewer potters. Maria was one of the potters. When she made a bowl, she took great care. She shaped it well and made it smooth. Her pots were very good.

When Maria was a young woman, some scientists were digging up things from a pueblo from a long time ago. They found pieces of a fine old bowl. They showed them to Maria. Her husband, Julian, was with her. "Can you make a bowl like this?" they asked. "I can try, but I cannot paint those designs on it. I am not good as designs." Maria said. "Maybe your husband can do the designs. He knows how to draw," they said.

It was agreed that Maria would make some bowls. They would be shaped like the bowls from a long time ago. Julian would paint designs on them. The bowls they made were beautiful. People said, "These are fine bowls. Make some more. You can sell them. People will pay for fine bowls like these." That is what they did. They made many bowls.

Maria and Julian studied the bowls that their people had made a long time ago. They looked at the old bowls in the museum. Their work got better and better. People loved the bowls they made and they sold every one of them. Now, some of Maria's people came to her. They said, "Your bowls bring you a lot of money. Will you teach us how to make them?" Maria agreed. She wanted to help her people. Good fortune should not be for her and Julian alone, she felt. It should be shared, so they taught the others.

The Native Americans of Maria's pueblo have a new way of earning money now. They make fine bowls. An old Native American art has been brought back. It was a dead art, but Maria and Julian made it live again. The pottery of the pueblo is famous now. Maria is also famous for her art, and she is famous for helping her pueblo.