



Puzzle provided by Kordemsky: *The Moscow Puzzles* (Dover)

This problem can be found in eighth-century writings.

A man has to take a wolf, a goat, and some cabbage across a river. His rowboat has enough room for the man plus either the wolf or the goat or the cabbage. If he takes the cabbage with him, the wolf will eat the goat. If he takes the wolf, the goat will eat the cabbage. Only when the man is present are the goat and the cabbage safe from their enemies. All the same, the man carries wolf, goat, and cabbage across the river. How?





Solution:

The wolf does not eat cabbage, so the crossing can start with the goat.

The man leaves the goat and returns, puts the cabbage in the boat and takes it across. On the other bank, he leaves the cabbage but takes the goat.

He leaves the goat on the first bank and takes the wolf across. He leaves the cabbage with the wolf and rows back alone.

He takes the goat across.