

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: A FAIRY STORY FROM FRANCE

Charles Perrault

There was once a little girl and her mother loved her very much. Her Grandmother was also very fond of her and had made a little red hood for her that suited her so well that everyone called her 'Little Red Riding Hood'

One day her mother baked some cakes and said to her: 'Go and see how your Grandmother is, because I hear that she is ill. Take her a cake and this small pot of butter.'

Little Red Riding Hood set off at once. Her Grandmother lived in another village on the far side of the wood and, as she was going through the wood, she met Master Wolf. The Wolf wanted to eat her but did not dare because some woodcutters were working nearby; so he asked her where she was going.

The little girl did not know that it was dangerous to stop and talk to a wolf so she said: 'I am going to see my Grandmother'

'Does she live far from here?' asked the wolf.

'Oh yes,' said Little Red Riding Hood, 'it's beyond that mill you can see over there, in the first house in the village.'

'I see.' Said the wolf, and ran off at top speed.

Red Riding Hood took a longer route and stopped along the way to gather flowers and nuts and chase butterflies.

The wolf soon reached the Grandmother's house and knocked; rat-a-tat.

'Who's there?'

'It's your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood' said the wolf, imitating her voice, 'I've brought you a cake and a pot of butter from my mother.'

The Grandmother, who was not feeling very well and was lying in bed, called out:

'Pull the catch and you will loose the latch.'

The wolf pulled the catch and the door opened. He sprang on the old lady and ate her all up because he had had nothing to eat for three days. Then he shut the door and got into the bed to wait for Little Red Riding Hood.

Presently she arrived and knocked at the door: rat-a-tat.

'Who's there?'

At first, Little Red Riding Hood was afraid when she heard the wolf's gruff voice, but she thought her Grandmother must have a cold, so she answered:

'It's your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood. I have brought you a cake and a pot of butter from my mother.'

Making his voice a little less gruff the wolf said:

'Pull the catch and you'll loose the latch.'

Little Red Riding Hood pulled the catch and the door opened.

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The wolf hid himself under the bedclothes and said:

'Put the cake and the little pot of butter on the bread-bin and climb into bed with me.'

Little Red Riding Hood did so and was very surprised to see how her Grandmother looked in her night clothes. She said to her:

'What big arms you have, Grandmother!'

'All the better to hug you with, my dear!'

'What big legs you have, Grandmother!'

'The better to run with, my child!'

'What big ears you have, Grandmother!'

'The better to hear you with, my child!'

'What big eyes you have, Grandmother!'

'The better to see you with, my child!'

'What big teeth you have, Grandmother!'

'They're to eat you with!'

And so saying, the wicked wolf sprang on Little Red Riding Hood and ate her up.

This story teaches that the very young,
Should never trust a stranger's artful tongue.