



Tonight's Bedtime Story

Fairy Tales for Sleepy Children

presents

Little Red-Riding-Hood

From "The Fairy Book" by Miss Mulock

Illustrations by Gustave Doré



Once there was a little village maiden, the prettiest ever seen. Her mother was foolishly fond of her, and her grandmother likewise. The old woman made for her a little hood, which became the damsel so well, that ever after she went by the name of Little Red-Riding-Hood. One day, when her mother was making cakes, she said, "My child, you shall go and see your grandmother, for I hear she is not well; and you shall take her some of these cakes, and a pot of butter."

Little Red-Riding-Hood was delighted to go, though it was a long walk; but she was a good child, and fond of her kind grandmother. Passing through a wood, she met a great wolf, who was most eager to eat her up, but dared not, because of a woodcutter who was busy hard by. So he only came and asked her politely where she was going. The poor child, who did not know how dangerous it is to stop and speak to wolves, replied, "I am going to see my grandmother, and to take her a cake and a pot of butter, which my mother has sent her."



"Is it very far from hence?" asked the wolf.

"Oh yes, it is just above the mill which you may see up there—the first house you come to in the village."

"Well," said the wolf, "I will go there also, to inquire after your excellent grandmother; I will go one way, and you the other, and we will see who can be there first."

So he ran as fast as ever he could, taking the shortest road, but the little maiden took the longest; for she stopped to pluck roses in the wood, to chase butterflies, and gather nosegays of the prettiest flowers she could find—she was such a happy and innocent little soul.

The wolf was not long in reaching the grand-mother's door. He knocked, Toc—toc, and the grandmother said, "Who is there?"

"It is your child, Little Red-Riding-Hood," replied the wicked beast, imitating the girl's voice; "I bring you a cake and a pot of butter, which my mother has sent you."

The grandmother, who was ill in her bed, said, "Very well, my dear, pull the string and the latch will open." The wolf pulled the string—the door flew open; he leaped in, fell upon the poor old woman, and ate her up in less than no time, tough as she was, for he had not tasted anything for more than three days. Then he carefully shut the door, and laying himself down snugly in the bed, waited for Little Red-Riding-Hood, who was not long before she came and knocked, Toc—toc, at the door.



"Who is there?" said the wolf; and the little maiden, hearing his gruff voice, felt sure that her poor grandmother must have caught a bad cold and be very ill indeed.

So she answered cheerfully, "It is your child, Little Red-Riding-Hood, who brings you a cake and a pot of butter that my mother has sent you."

Then the wolf, softening his voice as much as he could, said, "Pull the string, and the latch will open."

So Little Red-Riding-Hood pulled the string and the door opened. The wolf, seeing her enter, hid himself as much as he could under the cover-lid of the bed, and said in a whisper, "Put the cake and the pot of butter on the shelf, and then make haste and come to bed, for it is very late."

Little Red-Riding-Hood did not think so; but, to please her grandmother, she undressed herself and began to get ready for bed, when she was very much astonished to find how different the old woman looked from ordinary.



"Grandmother, what great arms you have!"

"That is to hug you the better, my dear."

"Grandmother, what great ears you have!"

"That is to hear you the better, my dear."

"Grandmother, what great eyes you have!"

"That is to see you the better, my dear."

"Grandmother, what a great mouth you have!"

"That is to eat you up," cried the wicked wolf; and immediately he fell upon poor Little Red-Riding-Hood, and ate her up in a moment.

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