

Have you ever wondered what might have happened if Little Red Riding Hood had reached Granny's cottage before the wolf?

Find answers to this question and more, such as:

Why was the woodcutter at Granny's house, in the first place?

What did the witnesses see?

What if the wolf got to complain about little girls, for once?

It's not just the same old story...

Traditional Tale

Alternative Ending

Diary Entries

Newspaper Report

Persuasive Letter

Play Script



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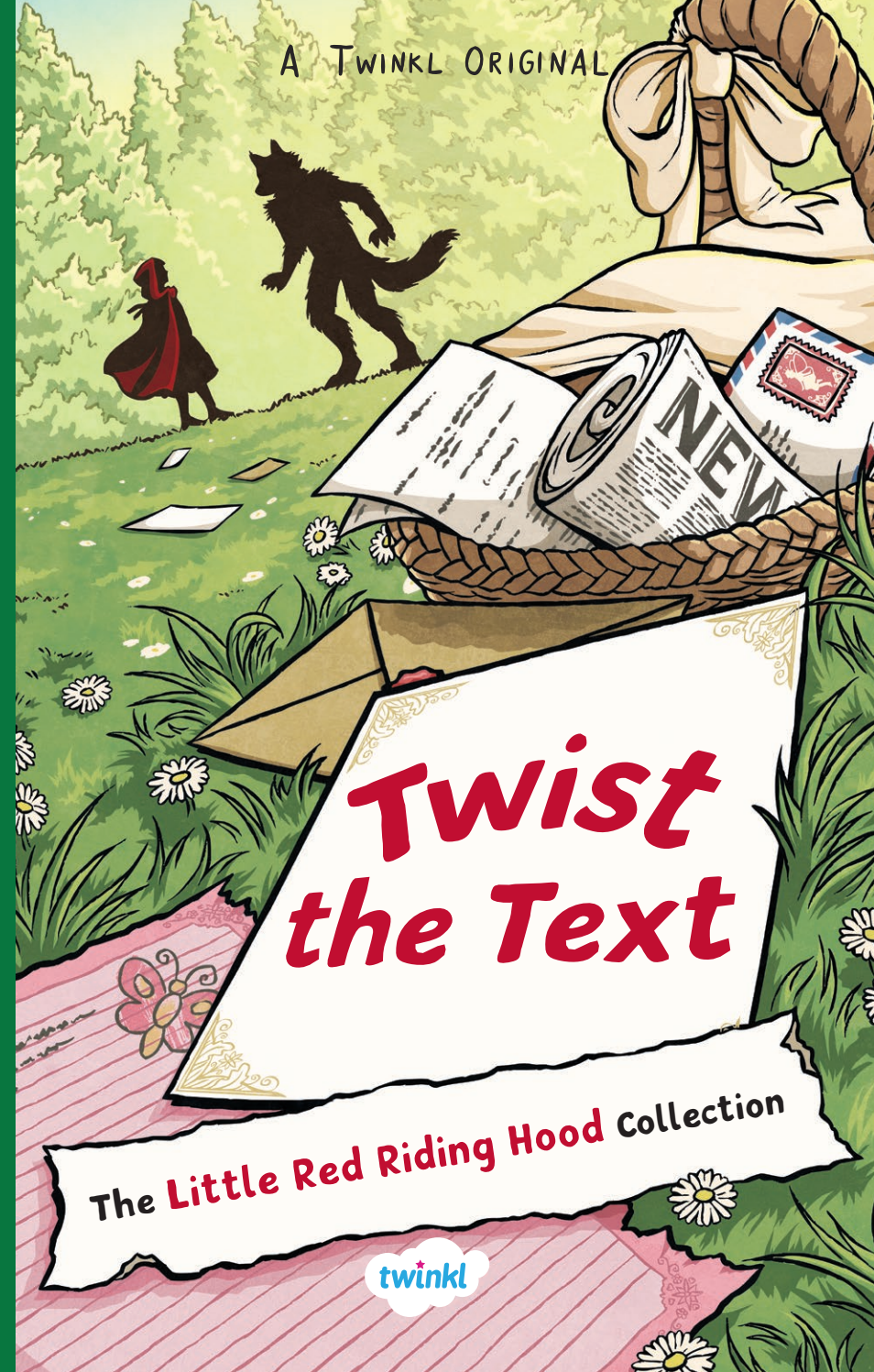


A Twinkl Original

Twist the Text: The Little Red Riding Hood Collection

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**Twist
the Text**

The Little Red Riding Hood Collection

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Twist the Text

The Little Red Riding Hood Collection

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Little Red Riding Hood: Traditional Tale

Once upon a time (and a very fine time it was), a girl called Red lived with her mother, in a cottage on the outskirts of a great forest.

On this particular spring day, Mother took a batch of fresh cupcakes from the oven and placed them on the table, where they steamed gently.

“Little Red!” shouted Mother, banging her rolling pin on the table. “Little Red! Time to get up.”

It was nearly noon and Red had only just woken up. She leapt out of bed, knowing that her mother would be cross. “Coming, Mother!” she called as she hurtled

down the stairs.

Red smelt the cupcakes before she saw them: sweet, buttery and delicious. As she bounced into the kitchen, she imagined sinking her teeth through the soft sponge for a huge bite. She reached out to take one, but her mother stilled her hand with one look.

“These smell delicious,” said Red, backing away. “You’ve been busy, Mother. Who are they for?”

“They’re for Granny, so keep your mucky fingers off. I didn’t raise you to steal from little old ladies. Why, your poor granny lives alone in the forest, surrounded by fearsome creatures. The least I can do is bake her a cupcake or two every now and then.”

“I wouldn’t dream of touching Granny’s cupcakes,” Red reassured her mother, but her stomach rumbled greedily.

Red was always hungry. She thought that it might have something to do with the way that she was growing. She knew that she was getting taller from one week to the next, because of the hooded cape that her granny had knitted her. The cape was red – just like her name. Each time she put it on, the cape’s hem

hung a little higher on her legs.

Mother huffed and put her hands on her hips.

“Now, you’re to take the cupcakes straight to Granny’s,” she said, piling them into a wicker basket. “No dilly-dallying, keep to the path, and never ever talk to strangers. Do you hear me?”

“Yes, Mother.” With a sigh, Red took the basket and hurried from the kitchen into the glorious spring sunshine.



As she skipped merrily through the sun-dappled forest, Little Red’s hazel eyes sparkled and her bright red cape swung just above her ankles. Her red hair shone in the afternoon sun and her small, freckled nose wrinkled as she smiled cheerfully at her woodland friends: the rabbits and birds. The birds flitted about, carrying sticks for their nests, and the bluebells beside the path nodded contentedly to themselves. Occasionally, Red would pause and lightly touch the petals of the

wildflowers with her dainty fingers as she stopped to smell them. It was a warm day, nearly summer, and it was hard to believe that anything fearsome lived in these woods.

A soft breeze blew and the blossom shook on the trees. It was the perfect day for a picnic. Red thought longingly of the cupcakes in her basket.

In fact, she was so busy thinking about cupcakes that she didn't spot a shadowy figure leaning against a tree trunk.

"Hello, little girl," oozed a silky voice.

Red jumped. "Who are you?"

"I'm Mr Wolf," replied the wolf. He was a very fine-looking gentleman with thick hair, bright eyes and very big, white teeth. "My, what a gorgeous day it is. Don't you just love the fragrant smell of the flowers? The twittering of the birds?"

Red blushed. Suddenly, her cape felt too tight around her neck. "I didn't think that wolves would like birds and flowers," she stammered.

"My dear, I simply adore them! I am a wolf of great taste, you know. Where might you be off to on this fine morning?"

"I'm visiting my granny." Red felt flustered. Mother had told her not to speak to strangers, but Mr Wolf seemed a very respectable and charming sort of person.

"Oh, yes, I know your granny," said the wolf. "Old woman? Stooped? Grey hair?"

"That's her," breathed Red, sighing with relief. If Mr Wolf knew Granny, then he wasn't a stranger after all.

"Yes, she lives in a..." Mr Wolf waved a claw in the air as if it were just on the tip of his tongue.

"Wooden cottage," suggested Red, to help him out.

"That's right, next to the..."

"Horse chestnut tree."

"Of course, not far from the..."

"Stream," Red finished. She was impressed. Mr Wolf

must have visited Granny's many times to remember so much about it. "I'm meant to be bringing her this basket of cakes, but they do smell so delicious, and it's so hard not to simply gobble them all up."

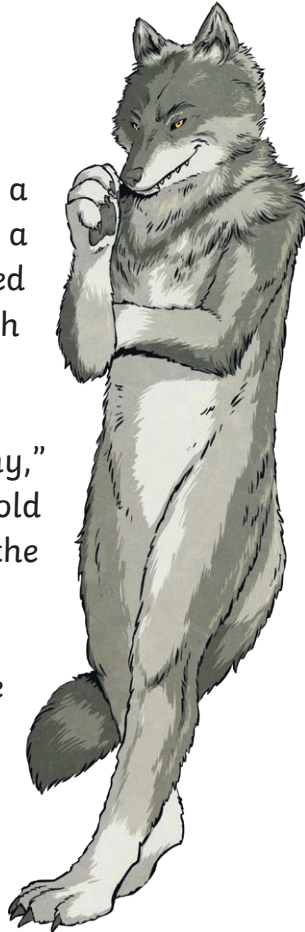
"I know that feeling," smiled the wolf.

"After all, I haven't had any breakfast yet."

"Well, why don't you stop for a picnic?" asked Mr Wolf. "There's a lovely spot over there." He pointed to a sunny clearing, crowded with daffodils.

"But they're meant to be for Granny," explained Red. "Anyway, Mother told me not to dilly-dally, or to leave the path."

"Oh, that clearing's quite safe," the wolf assured her. "I'm sure that your granny won't mind. Not if you pick her a big bunch of flowers to make up for it."



Red's stomach gurgled. The thought of eating cupcakes in the sun was too tempting to resist. "Yes, you're right," agreed Red. "Thank you, Mr Wolf. I never knew that wolves were so kind."

"My pleasure," growled the wolf, and with a bow, he stalked off down the path.

*

As he stalked, Mr Wolf licked his lips. That plump, foolish child had fallen for his trick. As soon as she was out of sight, he raced along the path to the wooden cottage, next to the horse chestnut tree, not far from the stream. His belly rumbled greedily. He was getting double helpings today.

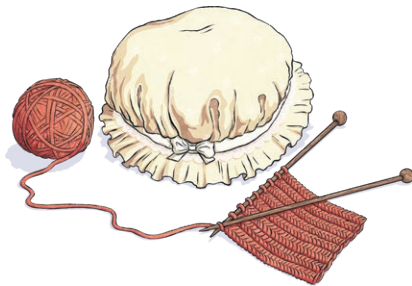
The wolf scurried up to the cottage door on tiptoes, so as not to alarm Granny.

Knock, knock, knock.

"Who is it?" quavered a frail voice from inside.

"It's me, Granny! It's your granddaughter," said Mr Wolf in a high, squeaking voice.

“The door’s unlocked, dear,” Granny called out. The wolf lifted the latch.



Granny didn’t have time to scream. She didn’t even have time to drop her knitting. The wolf leapt, and with a snap and a gulp, he swallowed her whole.

Red sat down amid the daffodils to eat. She ate one cupcake, and it was just as delicious as she had hoped. Then, before she could stop herself, she had reached for another and taken a big bite.

After polishing off three cupcakes, Red gathered a huge bunch of flowers, tucked them into her basket and carried on down the path.

At last, she saw Granny’s wooden cottage. She dashed up the path and skidded to a stop outside the door.

Knock, knock, knock.

“Who is it?” quavered a frail voice from inside.

“It’s me, Granny. It’s your granddaughter.”

“The door’s unlocked, dear.”

Red lifted the latch and hurried in.

Inside, Granny’s cottage looked much as it always did: an empty cup of tea sat on the table and some half-finished knitting lay draped over her rocking chair. But one thing was not the same. Instead of bustling by the sink or click-clacking her knitting needles, Granny was tucked up in bed.

“Granny!” gasped Red, dropping the basket and running to the bedside. “You’re sick.”

Granny was so ill that the quilt was drawn right up over her nose, and her nightcap was pulled right down almost to her eyes. Her fingers gripped the top of the quilt like they were clinging on for dear life.

“Terribly sick. Come closer, my dear, and kiss your poor old granny.”

So Red approached the bed and bent to kiss her

grandmother... but something stopped her.

“Oh, Granny, what big eyes you have!” remarked Red, and it was true. They were huge and round and strangely yellow. Red was sure that her granny must be very ill.

“All the better to see you with, my dear,” croaked Granny from under the quilt – and that’s when one long ear popped out from under her nightcap.

“Oh, Granny, what big ears you have!” said Red. She wondered if she should call for the doctor at once.

“All the better to hear you with,” croaked Granny, and this time, the quilt slipped down to reveal a muzzle with long, sharp teeth. Red trembled.

“Oh, Granny, what big teeth you have!” stuttered Red.

“All the better to *eat you with!*” roared the wolf, and with a snap and a gulp, he swallowed her whole.

*

The woodcutter was getting on in years. Although he wasn’t as spry as he once was and his joints creaked

as he walked, he could still swing an axe, still whistle a tune, and still feel flutters of affection in his heart when he saw a pretty face.

One pretty face made his heart flutter more than any other. The lovely lady in question was a widow who lived alone in the forest. She loved to knit and baked the most delicious cakes, and though she was no spring chicken herself, to the woodcutter, her beauty was timeless. He would find any excuse he could to pay her a visit.



The woodcutter straightened his shirt, shouldered his axe and stepped up to the cottage door.

Knock, knock, knock.

He waited. Any moment he would hear, as he always did, her musical voice call, ‘Who is it?’

But he heard only silence.

All at once, he was struck with fear. What if something had happened to her? He lifted the latch and threw the door open.

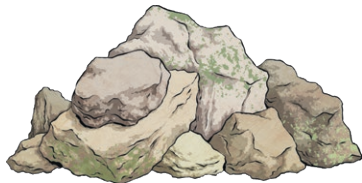
“Anyone home? It’s only me, the woodcutter!”

For a moment, he stared at the scene inside. Everything looked much as it always did. There was even a basket of cakes and flowers, as if the lady’s granddaughter, Red, had paid her a visit. But one thing was very, very wrong.

On the bed lay a figure in a frilly nightgown and cap. It had big ears and furry hands and sharp, white teeth.

It only took the woodcutter a moment to work out what had happened.

“You beast!” he roared, raising his axe. The wolf’s eyes shot open, but before he had time to scream or roll away, the woodcutter’s axe swished down and sliced his belly open.



Out jumped Granny and Red.

“You saved us!” they cried, and they threw their arms around the woodcutter. Granny even gave him a kiss

on the cheek, which made him blush.

The woodcutter held the wolf down while Red filled his belly with rocks. Finally, Granny sewed him up. The stones rattled inside the wolf as he stood up.

“How am I supposed to eat?” cried the wolf. “The whole forest will hear me coming!”

“That’ll teach you to eat an old lady,” Granny muttered to the groaning wolf. “Now, be off with you, and don’t come back.”

The wolf, clutching onto his full belly, limped from the cottage as quickly as he could. He hobbled out into the forest without a second glance back at Granny’s cottage.

“What I want to know is, how on earth did he find you?” asked the woodcutter, cleaning his axe.

“I met him in the forest,” explained Red, and she explained all about how the wolf had tricked her into telling him where Granny lived.

“But, Red, hasn’t your mother ever told you not to speak to strangers?” asked Granny in disbelief.

“Oh, mother tells me all sorts of things. Not to dilly-dally... not to leave the path... I don't know what she thinks might happen.”

“Perhaps she thinks that you'll be eaten by a wolf,” remarked the woodcutter.

“Oh!” said Red, as it dawned on her that the woodcutter was right. “I suppose she might have a point. Oh, Granny, I almost forgot! Mother sent you a basket of cupcakes.”

So, Granny boiled the kettle and between them, Red, Granny and the woodcutter ate up the delicious cupcakes that Red's mother had baked...

...and they all lived happily ever after.

The End





Little Red Riding Hood: Alternative Ending

Once upon a time (and a very fine time it was), a girl called Red lived with her mother, in a cottage on the outskirts of a great forest.

On this particular spring day, Mother took a batch of fresh cupcakes from the oven and placed them on the table, where they steamed gently.

“Little Red!” shouted Mother, banging her rolling pin on the table. “Little Red! Time to get up.”

It was nearly noon and Red had only just woken up. She leapt out of bed, knowing that her mother would

be cross. “Coming, Mother!” she called as she ran downstairs.

Red smelt the cupcakes before she saw them: sweet, buttery and delicious. As she entered the kitchen, she imagined sinking her teeth through the soft sponge for a huge bite. She reached out to take one, but her mother stilled her hand with one look.

“These smell delicious,” said Red, backing away. “You’ve been busy, Mother. Who are they for?”

“They’re for Granny, so keep your mucky fingers off. I didn’t raise you to steal from little old ladies. Why, your poor granny lives alone in the forest, surrounded by fearsome creatures. The least I can do is bake her a cupcake or two every now and then.”

“I wouldn’t dream of touching Granny’s cupcakes,” Red reassured her mother, but her stomach rumbled greedily.

Red was always hungry. She thought that it might have something to do with the way that she was growing. She knew that she was getting taller from one week to the next, because of the hooded cape that her granny had knitted her. The cape was red – just

like her name. Each time she put it on, the cape's hem hung a little higher on her legs.

Mother huffed and put her hands on her hips.

"Now, you're to take the cupcakes straight to Granny's," she said, piling them into a wicker basket. "No dilly-dallying, keep to the path, and never ever talk to strangers. Do you hear me?"

"Yes, Mother." With a sigh, Red took the basket and hurried from the kitchen into the glorious spring sunshine.

*

As she skipped merrily through the sun-dappled forest, Little Red's hazel eyes sparkled and her bright red cape swung just above her ankles. Her red hair shone in the afternoon sun and her small, freckled nose wrinkled as she smiled cheerfully at her woodland friends: the rabbits and birds. The birds flitted about, carrying sticks for their nests, and the bluebells beside the path nodded contentedly to themselves. Occasionally, Red would pause and lightly touch the petals of the wildflowers with her dainty fingers as she stopped to smell them. It was a warm day, nearly summer, and

it was hard to believe that anything fearsome lived in these woods.



A soft breeze blew and the blossom shook on the trees. It was the perfect day for a picnic. Red thought longingly of the cupcakes in her basket.

In fact, she was so busy thinking about cupcakes that she didn't spot a shadowy figure leaning against a tree trunk.

"Hello, little girl," said a silky voice.

Red jumped. "Who are you?"

"I'm Mr Wolf," said the wolf. He was a very fine-looking gentleman with thick hair, bright eyes and very big, white teeth. "My, what a gorgeous day it is. Don't you just love the fragrant smell of the flowers? The twittering of the birds?"

Red blushed. Suddenly, her cape felt too tight around her neck. “I didn’t think wolves would like birds and flowers,” she stammered.

“My dear, I simply adore them! I am a wolf of great taste, you know. Where might you be off to on this fine morning?”

“I’m visiting my granny.” Red felt flustered. Mother had told her not to speak to strangers, but Mr Wolf seemed a very respectable and charming sort of person.

“Oh, yes, I know your granny,” said the wolf. “Old woman? Stooped? Grey hair?”

“That’s her,” said Red.

“Yes, she lives in a...” Mr Wolf waved a claw in the air as if it were just on the tip of his tongue.

“Wooden cottage,” said Red, to help him out.



“That’s right, next to the...”

“Horse chestnut tree.”

“Of course, not far from the...”

“Stream,” said Red. She was impressed. Mr Wolf was almost as good at trickery as Red was. Not good enough to actually fool her, of course.

There was only one way to trick a trickster: beat him at his own game.

“I’m meant to be bringing Granny this basket of cakes,” said Red, “but they do smell so delicious, and it’s so hard not to simply gobble them all up.”

“Well, why don’t you stop for a picnic?” asked Mr Wolf. “There’s a lovely spot over there.” He pointed to a sunny clearing, crowded with daffodils.

“But they’re meant to be for Granny,” said Red, gasping with feigned shock. “Anyway, Mother told me not to dilly-dally, or to leave the path.”

“Oh, that clearing’s quite safe,” the wolf assured her. “I’m sure that your granny won’t mind. Not if you

pick her a big bunch of flowers to make up for it.”

“Yes, you’re right,” said Red. The wolf was totally fooled. Red fought to suppress a grin. “Thank you, Mr Wolf. I never knew that wolves were so kind.”

“My pleasure,” said the wolf, and with a bow, he stalked off down the path.

*

As the wolf stalked away, Red laughed to herself. She’d heard stories about wolves like him. They wooed you with fine words, then gobbled you up for tea. Red wasn’t about to let that happen to her.

As soon as the wolf was out of sight, Red dashed through the undergrowth, speeding in a direct line towards Granny’s house. She had promised her mother not to leave the path, but this was a promise that Red always made and never kept. In fact, Red knew the hidden routes through the forest as well as any wild animal.

Puffing and panting, Red ran up to her granny’s door.

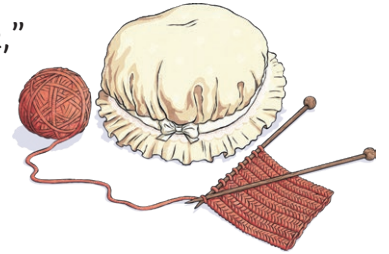
Knock, knock, knock.

“Who is it?” quavered a frail voice from inside.

“It’s me, Granny! It’s your granddaughter,” called Red.

“The door’s unlocked, dear,” said Granny, so Red flung the door open and dashed inside.

“Granny, we have to be quick,” said Red, pulling the old lady from her rocking chair. “A wolf is coming, and he’s planning to eat us. But not if we trick him first.”



Granny brandished her knitting needles. “I may be old, but I’m no one’s dinner,” she said. “What’s the plan?”

“Well, for starters,” said Red, “you’ll need your reading glasses.”

*

The wolf wandered through the forest, humming happily to himself. The sun sprinkled dancing lights

through the leaves, and daffodils crowded the edge of the path. The wolf knew that he was in for an enormous dinner.

At last, he reached the wooden cottage next to the horse chestnut tree, not far from the stream. His belly rumbled greedily as he tiptoed to the front door.

Knock, knock, knock.

“Who is it?” quavered a frail voice from inside.

“It’s me, Granny. It’s your granddaughter,” said the wolf in a high, squeaking voice.

“The door’s unlocked, dear.” So Mr Wolf lifted the latch and hurried in.

Inside, Granny’s cottage looked much as you would expect: an empty cup of tea sat on the table, some half-finished knitting lay draped over her rocking chair, and the pantry door stood slightly ajar.

But one thing was not as you’d expect. Granny was nowhere to be seen.

“Is that you, Red?” croaked the old lady. With a start,

the wolf noticed the shape beneath the bedclothes. Granny was tucked up in bed. Mr Wolf licked his lips. This was going to be so easy.

“Oh, Granny!” he squeaked, running to the bedside. “You’re sick.”

Granny’s quilt was drawn right up over her nose, and her nightcap was pulled right down almost to her eyes. Her fingers gripped the top of the quilt like they were clinging on for dear life.

“Terribly sick,” said Granny, coughing pathetically. “Come closer, my dear, so that I can see you.”

Granny reached for her reading glasses and placed them on her nose. As the wolf padded towards the bed, the pantry door creaked.

“Oh, granddaughter, what big eyes you have!” gasped Granny, as the wolf drew closer.

“All the better to see you with, Granny,” simpered the wolf.

In the pantry, Red reached for Granny’s rolling pin.

“Oh, granddaughter, what big ears you have!” said Granny.

“All the better to hear you with, Granny,” said the wolf, leaning down over Granny and opening his mouth wide.

In the pantry, Red gripped the rolling pin in both hands.



“Oh, granddaughter, what big teeth you have!” said Granny.

“All the better to eat you with!” roared the wolf. But as he pounced on Granny, Red leapt through the pantry door and brought the rolling pin crashing down onto the wolf’s head.

*

The woodcutter was getting on in years. He wasn’t as spry as he once was, and his joints creaked as he walked. But he could still swing an axe, still whistle a tune, and still feel flutters of affection in his heart when he saw a pretty face.

One pretty face made his heart flutter more than any other. The lovely lady in question was a widow who lived alone in the forest. She loved to knit and baked the most delicious cakes, and though she was no spring chicken herself, to the woodcutter, her beauty was timeless. He would find any excuse he could to pay her a visit.

Her wooden cottage – which stood next to the horse chestnut tree, not far from the stream – wasn’t strictly on his route that day, but since it was such a lovely afternoon, the woodcutter thought that he’d swing by. He had even stopped to pick a bunch of yellow daffodils, their petals as bright as sunshine.

But as the woodcutter neared the cottage, he heard strange noises: heavy footsteps, puffing and panting, then the old lady’s cross voice echoing through the trees.



“Why does he have to be so heavy?”

Then, he saw them: first the old lady (his heart fluttered) and then her red-cloaked granddaughter. They were staggering through the forest, carrying a load between them. The load was huge, heavy, and covered in fur...

The woodcutter dropped his bunch of daffodils.

“Is that a wolf?”

“It certainly is,” said Granny, out of breath. “Now make yourself useful, and help us carry him far, far away from here, before he wakes up.”

Once the trio had carried the wolf far, far away, they tramped back to Granny’s cottage together for tea. Granny put the kettle on, and Red brought out her basket of cupcakes. Her stomach groaned loudly. She hadn’t eaten all day, and carrying the unconscious wolf through the forest had been hard work.

“Mother sent you these cupcakes, Granny,” Red explained, heaping the cakes onto a plate. “She was baking all morning.”

“Oh, I can’t eat all of those!” said Granny, lowering herself into her rocking chair and picking up her knitting needles. “I hope you’re both hungry. You’ll have to help me out.”

Red was so hungry, she could have eaten a wolf!

So, between them, Red, Granny and the woodcutter ate up the delicious cupcakes that Red’s mother had baked. And they all lived happily ever after.

The End



21st February

Oh dear, Diary!

What an awful day! My chest is aching, my insides are churning and these hunger pains are torturing me. What is a famished wolf to do?

I heard the name-calling again, yesterday - those mean things that the hurtful humans like to say about me when they think that I can't hear - calling me 'big' and 'bad'. It's just not fair! I mean, 'big' - I can't help being this size! And 'bad' - why? Aren't wolves *supposed* to hunt in the forest? Don't they know that we're *carnivores* just trying to stay *alive*?!

Before today, barely a morsel of food had been within a whiff of my salivating chops for *weeks*. All that I had managed to eat were scraps. Not very big scraps, either - just a *pathetic* twelve rabbits, a *measly* fifteen fish, two *tiny* badgers and one *small, solitary* deer. There's so little left to hunt in this forest, I was beginning to feel like a vegetarian! It's like all of the good food has just up and disappeared!

So, imagine how I felt when I caught sight of a plump and juicy little girl, wandering alone in the forest. She wasn't even sticking to the path - *everyone* knows that if you stray into wolf territory, you're fair game. Instantly, I recognised her as I watched

from the shadow of a large oak. 'Red', they call her. 'Red meat' is what I was thinking! Who can blame me? I was practically *wasting away*!

"Looking for something?" I asked, in my silkiest voice. I was all hidden in shadow and probably looked *really cool* and mysterious.

They say that humans are supposed to be clever. Pah - not this one! This pathetic little girl couldn't even tell the difference between me and one of her own! It was as easy as pie to fool her and send her off on her picnic, while I beat her to her granny's house. The kid might as well have drawn me a map! By the time I reached the little cottage, I could barely keep the drool from hanging off my chin.

I knocked once, twice, three times. When the frail, quavering voice answered, for a solitary moment I almost turned back, almost regretted the thoughts that were rampaging through my famished mind. Yet, no sooner had the old woman opened the door than my instinct took over, and I swallowed her whole. I mean, it was hardly my choice. I am a wolf, after all!

Almost instantly, I had a moment of panic - I knew that the girl was on her way. Barely thinking straight, I threw on a spare nightgown and cap from the old woman's wardrobe. Looking in the mirror, I realised that the human nightclothes

didn't cover my furry, pointed snout or my equally furry feet - and my tail stuck out of the back! There was only one way that this could work. Feeling perfectly ridiculous, I jumped swiftly into bed and covered myself right up to my eyes with the bedclothes.

Before long, Red arrived in her ridiculous little hood and knocked on the door. And *that's* when I gave my best performance to date, Diary. I've been perfecting my old-lady voice for many years; it's award-worthy. That foolish child walked right into her granny's house and sat by the bed, and *still*, she didn't have me sussed. Incredibly, I managed to convince her that I was her very own granny! "What big eyes you have, Granny!" How *absurd!* Did she think that those hairy mitts clinging to the top of the bedclothes were her relative's, *claws* and all? Ha! When my furry ears popped out from under the nightcap, I knew that I was beginning to push my luck, and when the girl saw my teeth, I had no choice but to seize the chance. One almighty gulp, and she joined her granny.

Feeling bloated, with two whole humans wriggling around in my belly, I had no hope of getting away *anywhere* quickly. My biggest mistake followed - I tried to pass the time with a little knitting but I must have nodded off! The next thing that I saw through bleary eyes was the swinging axe of the woodcutter hailing mercilessly down upon me. My

eyes could have popped right out of my head as the gash tore through my belly. I felt terribly sick as both humans crawled from inside me. I might have even passed out as the vicious creatures filled me with rocks before sewing me up and sending me out with my tail between my legs. Oh, the piercing sting of that needle! How I limped home, I do not know.

So, Diary, here I am, curled up again in the den, feeling more miserable than ever. Hungry. Filled with rocks. Chopped open and sewn up. Probably *wasting away* through lack of a decent meal. And they say that *I'm* the one who's 'big' and 'bad'!

I can only hope that tomorrow will be a better day. I've heard rumors that a trio of pigs have recently moved to the forest. Perhaps I will have better luck there.



21st February

Dearest Diary,

Oh, my goodness! I've never been so frightened in all of my life! Yesterday, I was actually *eaten* by a wolf - that's right, eaten - and I lived to tell the tale. Can you believe it? Me, Red! Or 'Little Red', as everyone seems to want to say. Amph.

It all started when Mother sent me on yet *another* one of her errands. Don't get me wrong, I do *love* to visit Granny, but is it really necessary to take baskets of food all of the time? She couldn't get through this basket full of cupcakes even if she was having daily dinner parties with the whole village! And I do wish that mother wouldn't pester me so: "No dilly-dallying, keep to the path, and never ever talk to strangers. Do you hear me?" Pester, pester, *pester*.

Anyway, off I skipped in the beautiful sunshine, down the path to the lane and through the forest, waving to the old woodcutter as I went. It was such a lovely day; animals were scampering around on the ground and birds were chirping in the trees. I got quite carried away, until I heard a silky-sounding voice from the shadows.

I knew right away that this was one of the wolves that Mother had warned me about - he was a very fine-



looking gentleman with thick hair, bright eyes and very big, white teeth. He claimed that he knew Granny, and I'm ashamed to say that I believed him, Diary. He must have been very, *very* clever, because even now, I can't figure out how he knew where Granny lived.

I was oh-so hungry, Diary, and the cunning wolf convinced me to stop for a snack. I mean, my stomach was really, *really* gurgling! I really didn't stray from the path for long, and of course, I thought that I was perfectly safe! How wrong I was.

I arrived at Granny's cottage without a care in the world, but when I walked through the door, my heart sank. Granny was sick! I could see hardly anything of her, so I leaned in close, and when I did - oh, Diary! You wouldn't believe her eyes! Large and yellow - I was sure that she was deathly ill. When one long ear popped out from under her nightcap, I thought that I should surely call for the doctor at once!

But all that was nothing, Diary, compared with what I saw next. As she spoke to me, Granny's quilt slipped down to reveal a muzzle with long, sharp teeth. I thought that the bottom had dropped out of my stomach, and I began to shake so violently! I said the first thing that came to me:

"Oh, Granny, what big teeth you have!"

I suppose that I thought that it might give me a little time to think of an escape plan, if I could convince the creature that his disguise was still working. However, as I was about to clasp my hand around the heavy, glass vase on Granny's bedside table, the wolf's huge mouth opened up and, in an instant, everything went black.

I was actually *inside* its belly! Ugh! Pitch black, slimy and *extremely* smelly, the inside of the wolf was the worst place that I have ever been. I have no idea how long I was there for, Diary - *too* long. I wriggled and wrestled around in the strange, cramped space, but to no avail. I could hear Granny's muffled calls, and I could feel that she was near to me, but it was just too dark to see her!

After what felt like hours, I heard the faint voice of the old woodcutter.

"Anyone home? It's only me, the woodcutter!" he called.

I tried to scream, but the foul stench of the beast's insides caught in my throat. As I spluttered, I felt the wolf begin to move, and all at once, bright light burst through the dark, blinding me for a moment. I propelled myself towards it and fell with a *splat* onto the floor of Granny's little cottage. As Granny tumbled out beside

me, I gulped down fresh air before throwing my arms around our saviour.

Once we were free, Granny filled the beast with rocks. I know that it sounds a little extreme, but, this way, he will never be able to sneak up on another living thing! We sewed him up and kicked him back out of the door. I'd say that there's not much chance of him causing us trouble again any time soon!

As you can imagine, Diary, Granny and the woodcutter were *not* best pleased that I had led a big, bad wolf to the cottage and had strayed from the path. At least I could soften them up a little by giving them the cupcakes that Mother had sent me with! Mother was not so easy to talk around. I am not allowed to walk through the forest *ever again in my entire life* without her by my side. Oh well, I guess I won't have to deliver food any more.

I cannot wait to tell everyone in the village about this. Goldilocks will never believe it! It'll be no more 'Little Red' - more like 'Brave Red, the brilliant banisher of wolves!' Nevertheless, I have learned to be far more careful who I talk to when I am out and about - perhaps when mother pesters me, I should pay more attention... maybe...



21st February

Deary me, Diary!

What a week it's been. The ladies in the village were hanging off my every word today, for a change, when I told them about my terrifying near-death experience: I was eaten by a wolf! At my age! Gosh, there hasn't been this much of a kerfuffle since one of the girls swallowed that fly!

There I was, enjoying a little knitting by the fire after my wolf-defence class: a typical Tuesday. I was expecting a visit from my precious granddaughter, Red. Her mother usually sends her with parcels of some of food or other. If I didn't know that daughter of mine any better, I'd think that she doesn't believe that I can bake a thing for myself any more! I taught her everything that she knows about how to get around a kitchen. Doesn't she remember that I baked a gingerbread conservatory for that lovely woman in the forest? As if I can't bake my own cupcakes! How ridiculous!

I must admit, I was also wondering if that lovely woodcutter would drop by again. He's visited a few times, recently, and he always cheers me up with a few stories and a boiled sweet. I had a lovely day planned, Diary.

So imagine my dismay when, instead, the door was rattled by an almighty knocking, far too rough or strong for either Red or the woodcutter, both of whom are gentle souls. It gave me quite a start.

"Who is it?" I called, trying to hide the quiver in my voice. It was a shrill, awkward reply that came from the other side of the wooden door - someone *pretending* to be my granddaughter!

"It's me, Granny! It's your granddaughter." The nerve of it! I knew at once that it wasn't her voice, so I rose silently from my rocking chair and readied myself with a knitting needle poised in one hand.

"The door's unlocked, dear," I said, as calmly as I could muster.

If it hadn't been for my weak knees, I'd have taken care of that beast there and then. But I'm not as young as I used to be (and don't I know it). No sooner had I called out than the hairy brute was inside, as quick as flash, drooling mouth wide open, yellow teeth bared and disgusting breath stinking. I didn't even have time to jab at him with the needle, like I'd planned. Whoosh! He gulped me down in one.

What a pickle I was in! I poked and prodded inside that wolf's belly, making him belch and burp, but it

was no use - I was stuck. The next thing I knew, he was speaking - to Little Red, this time pretending to be me! Can you believe it? He didn't sound anything like me! Such cheek. I shouted and screamed, but she heard nothing, and sure enough, down the hatch she tumbled! What a dastardly, greedy creature!

There we were. Granny and granddaughter, trapped in the belly of a hideous beast. It was so dark in there that we couldn't see each other. After what felt like hours, my heart soared as I heard the woodcutter arrive and call out for me. I knew that he would be angry when he realised what this wicked wolf had done, so I was not surprised when light came streaming in. Red and I wriggled towards the light and fell with a *splat* onto the floor of my cottage.

Well, I wasn't letting that horrid beast get away. Wasting no time at all, we filled him with rocks and I put my sewing skills to good use by stitching him back up and sending him on his way. All done and dusted, we had time to boil the kettle up for a pot of tea and a cupcake, brought by Red (why the wolf didn't just eat those, I don't know).

I've since had rather a stern word with my granddaughter, as it turns out that in her childish innocence, she led the wolf straight to my door. I shall be making sure that she listens to her mother

in the future. Silly girl! Doesn't every child know not to speak to strangers?

I'm something of a hero now, with the knitting ladies at the village hall. That reminds me, I must go and finish that scarf that I've started. I think that the woodcutter is really going to like it!





WICKED WOLF GETS HIS JUST DESSERTS

Yesterday afternoon, a young girl and her grandmother miraculously survived a run-in with a ravenous wolf. Little Red Riding Hood was visiting her grandmother's cottage in the forest when both were swallowed alive by the creature. However, luck was on their side, as a local woodcutter was on hand to cut them free.

At approximately 1:15 p.m. on 21st February, witnesses claimed that they saw Miss Riding Hood, a young girl aged 10, skip into the forest carrying a basket of cupcakes. The path from the village through the forest is a well-trodden route, used by everyone from school children to village elders. Local resident Goldilocks (12) of Porridge Drive said, "I've used that path hundreds

of times and it's always seemed perfectly safe." Mr Hansel (35), who runs the village orphanage, commented, "Of course, I warn the children not to approach any gingerbread houses. But avoid the woods entirely? Nonsense."

Miss Riding Hood claims that she was nearly at her granny's cottage when she was approached by a wolf posing as a polite gentleman. She reports that the wolf acted kindly at first, and even pointed out a shortcut to her granny's cottage. However, all was not as it seemed. Miss Riding Hood explained that from the moment she arrived at her granny's cottage, she could sense that something was not quite right.

Once inside, Riding Hood found



Mr B.B. Wolf would not 'paws' to comment.

her granny in her nightgown, tucked up in bed, apparently ill. However, after a short bout of questioning, Red soon realised that the person to whom she was speaking was not her granny at all, but the wolf in disguise.

Miss Riding Hood alleges that both she and her granny were gobbled whole by the cunning wolf's stomach," she told The Once Upon a Times.

After ten traumatic minutes inside the wolf, the pair were freed by an axe-wielding woodcutter.

"As soon as I saw the wolf on the bed, I knew that something was wrong," stated the heroic woodcutter. "You didn't have to be a genius to work out where Granny and Red had ended up. He'd had the old lady for starters and her granddaughter for the main course."

Miss Riding Hood and her grandmother are now staying with Miss Riding Hood's mother in the village, where they are said to be recovering well. Meanwhile, Mayor Gretel has announced plans for an investigation into the cunning, wolfish activity in Fairytale Forest. If she fails to act, could our beloved forest be lost forever?

Pinocchio, Junior Correspondent

Mr B. B. Wolf
 The Den
 89 Foxhole Lane
 Fairytale Forest
 W01 F1E

Animal & Pest Control
 Fairytale Forest Council
 15 Gingerbread Lane
 Taletown
 STOR 1E5

23rd February

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you to request your help in eradicating a true menace which has been plaguing our precious forest for months. I have had no reply to my previous three letters; I hope that the following will be enough to prompt some sort of action on your part. The menace of which I speak is, of course, *little girls*.

Firstly, it becomes instantly clear to anyone who

takes a leisurely stroll through our dear Fairytale Forest that the presence of little girls has done nothing but damage this once beautiful and sacred natural habitat. Our footpaths, which once meandered delicately between the trees, touched only by animals and falling leaves, are now brutally eroded and scuffed by many pairs of skipping feet. These horrendous beings do not tread lightly when making their way through sun-dappled forests; no, they feel the need to skip and bounce, thundering between the trees, kicking up dust and singing tunelessly as they go. The noise pollution alone caused by this incessant crooning has driven away the woodland birds.

Secondly, I would like to discuss the littering epidemic. I emerged from my den last week to find what looked like a deliberate trail of breadcrumbs strewn across my path! Needless to say, I swept them right up so as to maintain the beautiful view from my doorway. If we are not careful, and if we do not act right away, this careless littering could escalate – today, it is breadcrumbs on a path, but what next? Streams filled with cupcakes? Candy canes hanging from

trees? In addition (as if these loathsome beings were not content with filling our beloved forest with debris), there is the bare-faced robbery which occurs every time a little girl decides to collect a sweet-smelling bouquet of flowers for an adored relative. Did you know that one in every twenty daffodils was picked this spring by little girls? I'm sure that you will agree that something needs to be done before the situation gets out of hand.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I wish to draw your attention to the scandalous, violent and even *murderous* exploits of the little girls who have been afflicting our homeland lately. I have spoken to eyewitnesses who claim that little girls have been breaking into their homes, eating their breakfast foods, breaking their furniture and even sleeping in their beds! There is no one in their right mind who would not feel outraged and violated if this were to happen to them. Are we no longer safe in our homes? Should we tell our pups to check under their beds for little girls before they go to sleep? These criminals are getting away with breaking and entering,

vandalism and, in my case, attempted murder. This week, I myself fell prey to the most terrible little girl of them all and her elderly accomplice. I warn you: they're clever. They hide behind a mask of sweetness and innocence, and then, before you've even had a chance to fish Granny's knitting from between your teeth, they've set a murderous lumberjack on you. I barely escaped with my life, and I fear that I will have to live with my injuries for the rest of my days.

In conclusion, I am sure that you will agree that these vicious, obnoxious and destructive creatures need to be eradicated from our woodland, where so many of our friends and family reside. Without immediate action, I fear for the future of our forests. I implore you to restore our faith in our council by relieving us of these pests once and for all.

Yours faithfully,

B.B. WOLF

B. B. Wolf



Little Red Riding Hood: Play Script

Characters



a younger sibling, eager
for a story



an older sibling, and our
animal narrator



a young girl who wears
a red, hooded cape



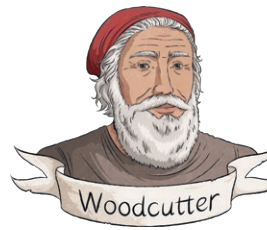
usually baking, she
wears a floury apron and
carries a rolling pin



a very fine-looking gentleman
with thick hair, bright eyes
and very big, white teeth, who
turns out to be a trickster



a widow with a frail voice who
lives alone in the forest, and
who loves to knit and bake



though he's getting on in
years, he still feels flutters of
affection in his heart when
he sees Granny's face

Scene 1 – Mother’s Kitchen

Lights up. The narrators, Big Rabbit and Little Rabbit, stand downstage.

Little Rabbit: Big Rabbit, Big Rabbit, is it time for a story?

Big Rabbit: What story would you like?

Little Rabbit: Do you know the story of Little Red Riding Hood?

Big Rabbit: *(excited)* Of course I do! Let me just think how it begins. Ah yes, I remember!

Lights up on a cottage on the outskirts of a great forest. It is a spring day.

Big Rabbit: Once upon a time – and a very fine time it was – a girl called Red lived with her mother, in a cottage on the outskirts of a great forest.

Mother takes a batch of fresh cupcakes from the oven and places them on the table.

Mother: Little Red! *(bangs the rolling pin on the table)* Little Red! Time to get up.

Red: *(offstage)* Coming, Mother!

Mother looks up at the clock (it’s noon) and taps her foot angrily. Red enters the kitchen in a red cape. Seeing the cupcakes, she reaches out to take one, but her hand stops as Mother turns to glare.

Red: These smell delicious. *(backing away)* You’ve been busy, Mother. Who are they for?

Mother: They’re for Granny, so keep your mucky fingers off. I didn’t raise you to steal from little old ladies. Why, your poor granny lives alone in the forest, surrounded by fearsome creatures. The least I can do is bake her a cupcake or two every now and then.

Red: *(rubbing her tummy)* I wouldn't dream of touching Granny's cupcakes.

Mother piles the cupcakes into a wicker basket, then puts her hands on her hips.

Mother: *(huffing)* Now, you're to take this basket straight to Granny's. No dilly-dallying, keep to the path, and never ever talk to strangers. Do you hear me?

Red: *(sighing)* Yes, Mother.

Red takes the basket and hurries from the kitchen.

Big Rabbit: And with that, Little Red Riding Hood hurried from the kitchen into the glorious spring sunshine.

Lights down.

Scene 2 – The Forest

Lights up on a sun-dappled forest. Red enters, skipping and singing.

Big Rabbit: As she skipped merrily through the sun-dappled forest, Little Red's hazel eyes sparkled and her bright red cape swung just above her ankles. Her red hair shone in the afternoon sun and her small, freckled nose wrinkled as she smiled cheerfully at her woodland friends: the rabbits and birds.

Red stops to smell some flowers.

Big Rabbit: The birds flitted about, carrying sticks for their nests, and the bluebells beside the path nodded contentedly to themselves. It was hard to believe that anything fearsome lived in these woods.

Red peeks into the basket and rubs her tummy. Wolf stalks onto stage behind Red and leans against a tree trunk.

Wolf: (silky) Hello, little girl.

Red jumps and gasps.

Red: Who are you?

Wolf: I'm Mr Wolf. My, what a fine day it is. Don't you just love the fragrant smell of the flowers? The twittering of the birds?

Red: *(tugs at the cape around her neck)* I didn't think that wolves would like birds and flowers.

Wolf: My dear, I simply adore them! I am a wolf of great taste, you know. Where might you be off to on this fine morning?

Red: *(flustered)* I'm visiting my granny.

Wolf: Oh, yes, I know your granny. Old woman? Stooped? Grey hair?

Red: *(sighing with relief)* That's her.

Wolf: Yes, she lives in a... *(waving a claw in the air)*

Red: Wooden cottage.

Wolf: That's right, next to the...

Red: Horse chestnut tree.

Wolf: Of course, not far from the...

Red: Stream.

Big Rabbit: Red was impressed. Mr Wolf must have visited Granny's many times to remember so much about it.

Wolf smirks.

Red: I'm meant to be bringing her this basket of cakes, but they do smell so delicious, and it's so hard not to simply gobble them all up.

Wolf: *(aside)* I know that feeling.

Red: After all, I haven't had any breakfast yet.

Wolf: Well, why don't you stop for a picnic? *(pointing offstage)* There's a lovely spot over there.

Red: But they're meant to be for Granny. Anyway, Mother told me not to dilly-dally, or to leave the path.

Wolf: Oh, that clearing is quite safe. I'm sure that your granny won't mind. Not if you pick her a big bunch of flowers to make up for it.

Red: Yes, you're right. Thank you, Mr Wolf. I never knew that wolves were so kind.

Wolf: *(bowing)* My pleasure.

Red skips off. As she leaves, Wolf licks his lips.

Wolf: That plump, foolish child fell for my trick. Now that she's out of sight, I'll race to the wooden cottage, next to the horse chestnut tree, not far from the stream. I'm getting double helpings today.

Wolf stalks off.

Little Rabbit: Wait, it was all a trick?

Big Rabbit: Of course it was a trick.

Little Rabbit: He's not a nice wolf after all?

Big Rabbit: No, he's the Big Bad Wolf!

Little Rabbit: Oh no!

Lights down.

Scene 3 – Granny’s Cottage

Lights up on Granny’s cottage in the woods. Granny sits in the rocking chair, knitting.

Big Rabbit: As the wolf raced along the path to the wooden cottage, next to the horse chestnut tree, not far from the stream, his belly rumbled greedily.

Wolf scurries up to the cottage door on tiptoes and knocks three times.

Granny: *(quavering)* Who is it?

Wolf: *(in a high, squeaking voice)* It’s me, Granny! It’s your granddaughter.

Granny: The door’s unlocked, dear.

Wolf lifts the latch, throws open the door and leaps at Granny. Wolf chases her offstage and makes satisfied gobbling sounds. Then, he saunters back on stage.

Little Rabbit: Did he really eat her?

Big Rabbit: He really ate her.

Wolf pulls on the nightcap and nightgown. He leaps into bed and pulls the quilt over his snout.

Big Rabbit: After polishing off three cupcakes, Red had gathered a huge bunch of flowers, tucked them into her basket and carried on down the path. Soon, she skidded to a stop outside the door.

Red runs to the door and knocks three times.

Wolf: *(in a frail voice)* Who is it?

Red: It’s me, Granny! It’s your granddaughter.

Wolf: The door’s unlocked, dear.

Red: *(lifting the latch and hurrying in)* Granny! You’re sick.

Wolf: Terribly sick! Come closer, my dear, and kiss your poor old granny.

Red puts down her basket and approaches the bed. She leans down to kiss the wolf's cheek, but pulls back suddenly.

Red: Oh, Granny, what big eyes you have!

Wolf: *(croaking)* All the better to see you with, my dear.

An ear pokes out of the nightcap.

Red: Oh, Granny, what big ears you have!

Wolf: *(croaking)* All the better to hear you with, my dear.

Wolf's quilt slips further to reveal long, sharp teeth.

Red: *(trembling)* Oh, Granny, what big teeth you have!

Wolf: *(no longer pretending)* All the better to eat you with!

Wolf roars and leaps out of bed. Red shrieks as Wolf chases her offstage. Offstage, he makes satisfied gobbling noises. Wolf waddles back on stage, patting his full belly. He yawns and lies down to sleep on Granny's bed.

Big Rabbit: In the woods lived a woodcutter who was getting on in years. Although he wasn't as spry as he once was and his joints creaked as he walked, he could still swing an axe, still whistle a tune, and still feel flutters of affection in his heart when he saw a pretty face. There was one pretty face that made his heart flutter more than any other. The lovely lady in question was Granny.

The woodcutter stands outside Granny's cottage. He straightens his shirt, shoulders his axe and steps up to the cottage door. He knocks three times and waits. He looks worriedly at his watch. He lifts the latch and opens the door.

Woodcutter: *(loudly)* Anyone home? It's only me, the woodcutter!

The woodcutter stares around the room and sees the wolf laying in bed, wearing Granny's nightgown and cap.

Big Rabbit: It only took the woodcutter a moment to work out what had happened.

Woodcutter: *(angrily bellows)* You beast!

The woodcutter raises his axe. Wolf wakes up. They run offstage. The wolf roars, there's a thud and a whimper.

Little Rabbit: What was that thudding sound?

Big Rabbit: The woodcutter swished down his axe and sliced the wolf's belly open. Once Red and Granny were free, they filled his belly with heavy rocks and sewed him up.

Little Rabbit: *(outraged)* Rocks?

Big Rabbit: Well, they had to make sure that he wouldn't try to gobble up anybody else!

The woodcutter enters the cottage with Granny and Red.

Granny & Red: You saved us!

Red and Granny throw their arms around the woodcutter. Granny kisses him on the cheek. Wolf limps back onto the stage, rubbing his filled belly. The stones rattle inside the wolf.

Wolf: How am I supposed to eat?
The whole forest will hear me coming!

Granny: That'll teach you to eat an old lady. Now, be off with you, and don't come back.

Wolf hurries to the door and hobbles out of the cottage without a second glance.

Woodcutter: *(cleaning his axe)* What I want to know is, how on earth did he find you?

Red: I met him in the forest.

Granny: *(shocked)* But, Red, hasn't your mother ever told you not to speak to strangers?

Red: Oh, mother tells me all sorts of things. Not to dilly-dally... not to leave the path... I don't know what she thinks might happen.

Woodcutter: Perhaps she thinks that you'll be eaten by a wolf.

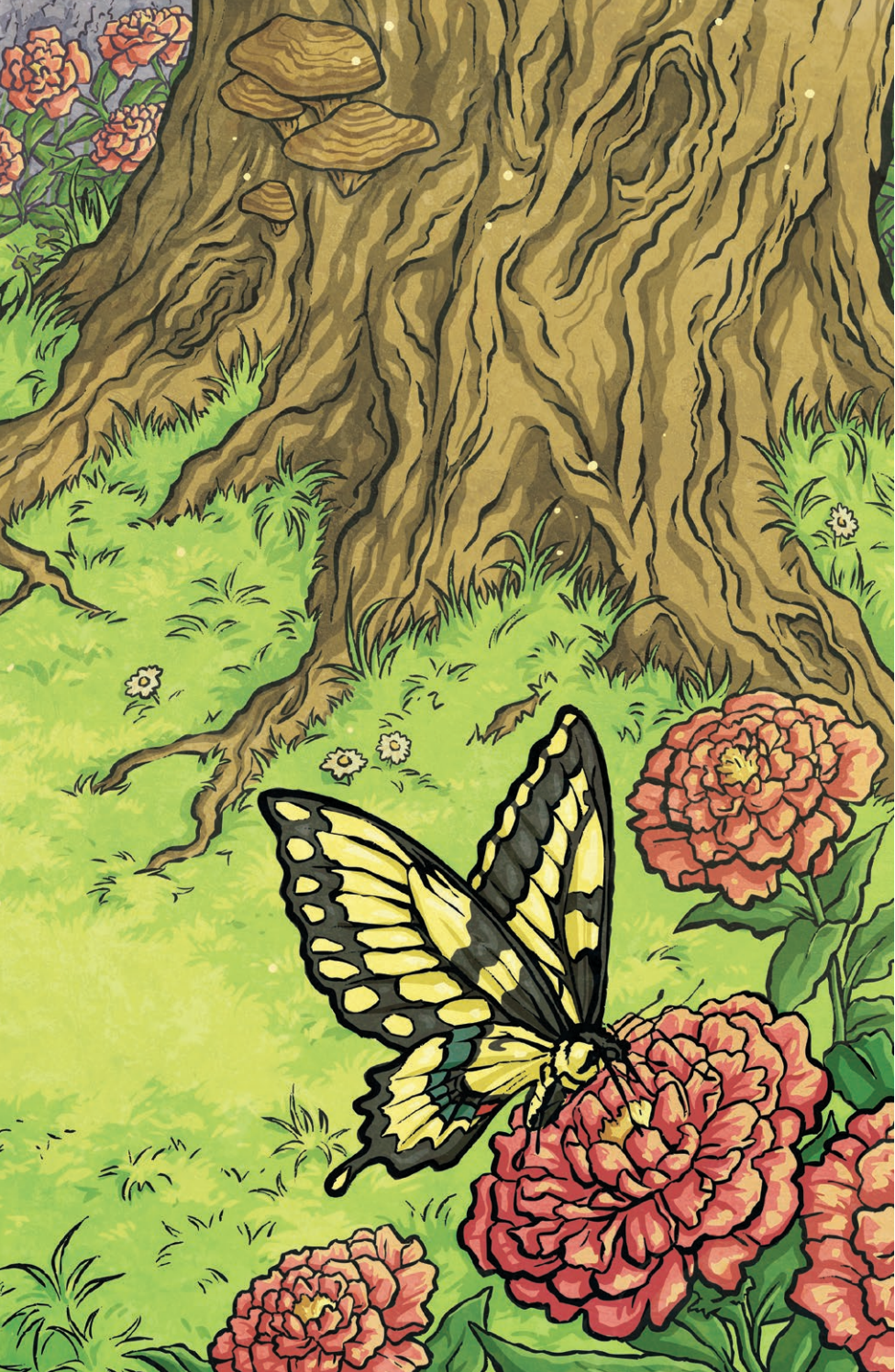
Red: *(realising)* Oh! I suppose she might have a point. Oh, Granny, I almost forgot! Mother sent you a basket of cupcakes.

Red fetches the basket of cupcakes.

Big Rabbit: So, Granny boiled the kettle and between them, Red, Granny and the woodcutter ate up the delicious cupcakes that Red's mother had baked. And they all lived happily ever after.

Red, Granny and the woodcutter eat the cupcakes and sip tea inside the cottage. The lights fade.

The End



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