



'LITTLE RED RIDING
HOOD' CHARLES
PERRAULT

Edit by Stephanie Darke

‘Little Red Riding Hood’ Charles
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Once upon a time, in a village, there lived a little girl, the prettiest you could wish to see. Her mother adored her, and her grandmother adored her even more. This kind lady had a riding-hood* made for her granddaughter; it was red, and it suited her so well that everywhere she went she was called Little Red Riding-Hood. One day, when her mother had done some baking, she made some buns,* and said: ‘Go and see how your grandmama is, because I’ve heard she isn’t well. Take her one of these buns, and a little pot of butter.’ Little Red Riding-Hood set off at once to visit her

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grandmother, who lived in another village. As she was going into a wood, she met Master Wolf, and he wanted very much to eat her up; but he did not dare, because there were some woodcutters in the forest. He asked her where she was going. The poor child, who did not know that it is dangerous to stay and listen to a wolf, told him: 'I am going to see my grandmother, and I'm taking her a bun and a little pot of butter that my mother is sending me with.' 'Does she live a long way off?' asked the Wolf.

'Oh yes,' said Little Red Riding-Hood, 'it's beyond the mill that you can see ever so far away over there, and it's the first house you come to in the village.' 'Well then,' said the Wolf, 'I'd like to go and see her too.'

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‘I’ll go by this path here, and you go by that one, and we’ll see who gets there first.’

The Wolf began to run as hard as he could along his path, which was shorter, while the little girl went by the longer path, and amused herself gathering hazel-nuts, running after butterflies, and making posies out of the flowers that she saw. The Wolf did not take long to reach the grandmother’s house. He knocked at the door, rat-a-tat-tat!

‘Who is it?’

‘It’s me, your granddaughter, Little Red Riding-Hood,’ said the Wolf, imitating the little girl’s voice, ‘and I’ve brought you a bun and a little pot of butter that Mummy has sent.’

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The kind grandmother, who was in bed because she was not feeling very well, called out: 'Draw the peg back, and the bar will fall.' The Wolf drew the peg back and the door opened. He flung himself on the old lady, and ate her all up in less than a moment, because he had not had a meal for more than three days. Then he shut the door, went to lie down in the grandmother's bed, and waited for Little Red Riding-Hood. In a little while she came, and knocked on the door, rat-a-tat-tat!

'Who is it?'

Little Red Riding-Hood, hearing the Wolf's gruff voice, was frightened at first, but, believing that her grandmother had a cold,

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she answered: 'It's me, your granddaughter, Little Red Riding-Hood, and I've brought you a bun and a little pot of butter that Mummy has sent.' Making his voice a little softer, the Wolf called out: 'Draw the peg back, and the bar will fall.' Little Red Riding-Hood drew the peg back and the door opened. When he saw her coming in, the Wolf hid under the bedclothes, and said: 'Put the bun and the little pot of butter on the chest, and come and get into bed with me.' Little Red Riding-Hood undressed and got into the bed, where she was very surprised to see what her grandmother looked like without any clothes on, and she said: 'Oh grandmama, what long arms you have!'

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‘All the better to hug you with, my
dear.’

‘Oh grandmama, what long legs
you have!’

‘All the better for running with, my
dear.’

‘Oh grandmama, what big ears you
have!’

‘All the better to hear you with, my
dear.’

‘Oh grandmama, what big eyes
you have!’

‘All the better to see you with, my
dear.’

‘Oh grandmama, what great big
teeth you have!’

‘And they are all the better to eat
you with!’*

And as he said these words, the
wicked Wolf flung himself on

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Little Red Riding-Hood, and ate
her up.

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The Moral of this Tale:

Young children, as this tale will
show,

And mainly pretty girls with
charm,

Do wrong and often come to harm

In letting those they do not know

Stay talking to them when they
meet.

And if they don't do as they ought,

It's no surprise that some are
caught

By wolves who take them off to eat.

I call them wolves, but you will fi
nd

That some are not the savage kind,

Not howling, ravening or raging;

Their manners seem, instead,
engaging,

They're softly-spoken and discreet.

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Young ladies whom they talk to on
the street

They follow to their homes and
through the hall,

And upstairs to their rooms;* when
they’re there

They’re not as friendly as they
might appear:

These are the most dangerous
wolves of all.