

(slightly more)

Logical Fairy Tales

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1 Little Red Riding Hood

Once upon a time, in a land far far away, there was a little girl, who lived with her mother in a cottage at the edge of the forest. Because she always wore a red cape with a hood, everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood. Her own given name was actually much shorter and more practical, but, what can you do? She didn't think the nickname sounded very inspired, but, she had to admit to her friend Tom Thumb, it could have been worse.

One day, Little Red Riding Hood's mother called her over.

"Little Red Riding Hood," she said, "your grandmother has taken ill."

Regrettably, LRRH agreed.

"I've made some invigorating broth for her, and got some oranges," her mother continued.

Depending on what was wrong, exactly, with her grandmother, LRRH thought it made more sense to get a doctor, but she supposed her mother meant well.

"Take this basket, walk through the forest to your grandmother's house on the other side. And beware of the wolf. Stay on the path."

LRRH stared at her in disbelief.

"You want me to walk through the forest to visit grandma, on my own. While a hungry wolf has been spotted nearby."

"Yes. Now go, or you won't be able to make it there before dark."

LRRH looked up at the sky. It was already quite late into the afternoon.

"How do you know she's ill?"

"The hunter told me."

LRRH sighed. Grown-ups could be so dimwitted at times.

“Then why didn't you give him the basket to take to grandma? Or wait until he drops by again tonight? He can defend himself from any wolves.”

Her mother lost patience with her. “If I tell you to go to grandma, you will go! Stay on the path, don't dawdle, don't talk to strangers.”

LRRH picked up the basket. “I assume I'm staying over at grandma's, so I won't have to walk back through the forest in the middle of the night?”

This would indeed be the case, and LRRH set out.

She hadn't even walked that far when she spotted the wolf a little ways down the path. He was leaning against a tree. On his hind legs.

“Where are you going, Little Red Riding Hood?” he asked.

A hungry, wolfish, creepy stalker, LRRH determined.

“To the doctor,” she replied, giving a vivid description of some extremely unpleasant diseases, and ended with, “I hope the doctor will be able to cure me of them quickly.”

The wolf fled into the forest, hairs on his back and neck standing up straight.

Grandmother was laying in bed, sick and grumpy. She had been planning to wash the windows, and the curtains...and now that would have to be put off.

A knock on the door made her look up. It would be nice if her daughter thought to visit; she just hoped Little Red Riding Hood wouldn't be left home alone. That wouldn't be safe for a child that young.

"Door's open!" she croaked.

Before she knew what was happening, the wolf leapt inside and gulped her down in one big swallow.

"Darn it," the old lady muttered, and sneezed. She was allergic to dogs. She heard the wolf giggle at the tickle that caused to his ribs. "I hope I give you indigestion, you mangy mutt."

The wolf donned one of grandmothers nightgowns and climbed into the bed.

A little later LRRH knocked on the door.

"Door's open!" a low, rather croaky voice called.

LRRH opened the door and stared at the bed in shock.

"Come closer, my child," the wolf said, "so I can see you better."

"Erm, no, thanks," LRRH said, "I can see that you're not my grandmother from here, just fine, thanks." And she ran off as fast as her legs could carry her.

She literally ran into the hunter right by the edge of the forest.

"Wolf...wolf...he wolf ate...grandma..." she panted.

"Did he, now?" the hunter loaded his double-barrelled shotgun and stuck his knife in his belt.

Meanwhile, the wolf wasn't feeling all that well. He would do better, he thought as he leaned bck into the pillows, to not eat any more sick old women. He closed his eyes and fell asleep.

Shortly afterwards the hunter and LRRH entered. The hunter took out his knife and cut open the wolfs' stomach. Grandmother came out, unharmed but fairly grimy.

"Little Red Riding Hood? What are you doing here all on your own, sweetheart?" she asked. Though, really, after the events of the day, nothing could truly surprise her.

"Shhhh," the hunter said, "don't wake the wolf."

Grandmother and LRRH looked between wolf and hunter and back to the wolf.

"You just cut open his stomach," LRRH pointed out.

"I did!" the hunter proudly agreed.

"And that didn't wake him up," grandma added.

"I have a plan," the hunter said, "we fill up his stomach with rocks, sow him up again, and then when he goes out to have a drink, the weight of the rocks will make him fall into the water and drown."

LRRH sighed and shook her head sadly. He'd been so deliciously practical right up to this point; too bad he hadn't been able to carry it home.

"Or we just do this," she said, and took the rifle, shot the wolf through the brains, and then cut his throat for good measure.

"Oh dear," grandmother commented, "it'll take quite a bit of washing for that to come out."

"I think it might be best if you came to stay with us," LRRH said, "at least until you're well again. The hunter can escort us home."

"Yes, that reminds me, where IS your mother, Little Red Riding Hood," the hunter asked.

"Home," LRRH said matter-of-factly.

Grandma frowned. "She sent you on your own?" she said angrily, "come on. We'll go right away."

When they arrived at LRRH's home, they heard strange sounds coming from inside.

"Another wolf!" the hunter exclaimed, and reloaded his rifle. He jumped through the open window. A scream came from the house. And then another one, but this time from the hunter.

Grandmother rolled her eyes and opened the door.

"Mum...why are you in bed this early?" LRRH asked, open-mouthed.

"I, eh, was a little tired," her mother said.

"Mum...why are you wearing so little clothing?"

"I...that's because it's warm, darling," her mother said, blushing.

"Mum...why is there a strange man here?"

"That's the...plumber....what are you doing home already? You were supposed to stay over at Grandma's!"

In the end, Grandmother moved in with LRRH and her mother, so LRRH wouldn't be sent into the forest on her own anymore. Just to be sure, though, LRRH apprenticed with the hunter. And they all lived long (except for grandma) and happily ever after.