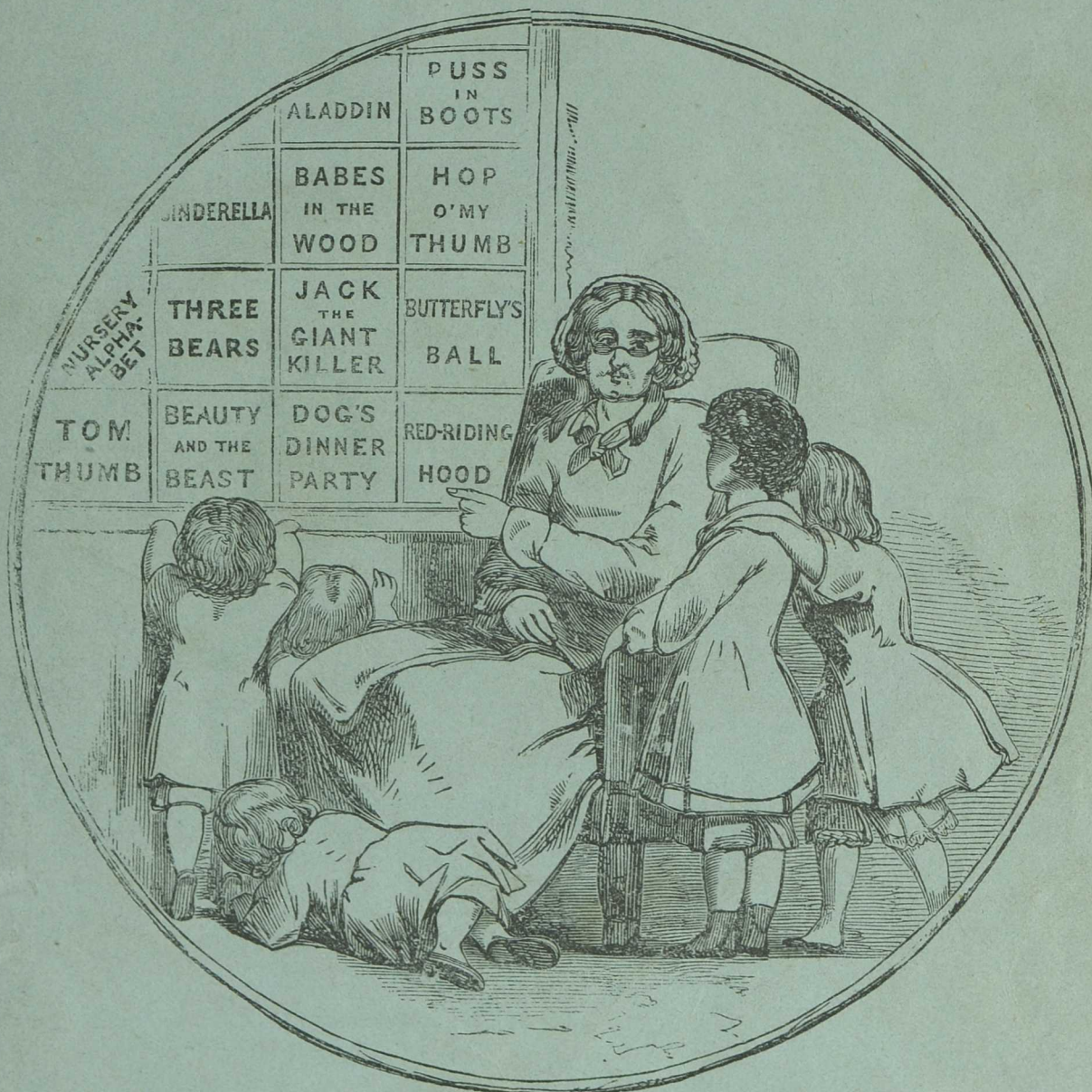


Oxford

SECOND SERIES OF
AUNT MAJOR'S PICTURE BOOKS
FOR
LITTLE READERS.

LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD.



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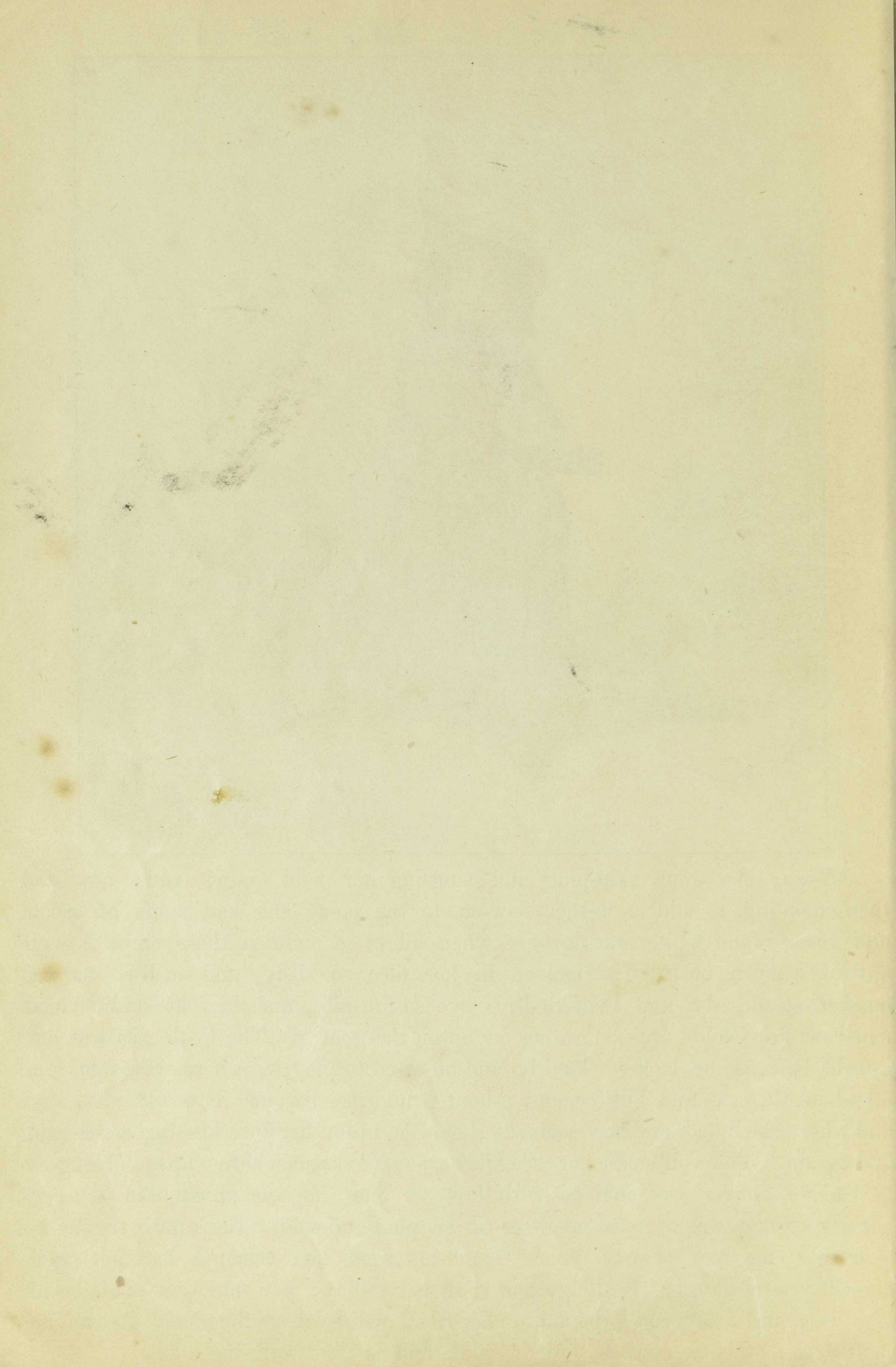
LIT-TLE RED RI-DING HOOD.



In a small vil-lage, in the good old times, liv-ed a sweet pret-ty child who lov-ed e-ve-ry thing, and e-ve-ry one, and was lov-ed by e-ve-ry bo-dy, but most of all by her poor Mo-ther, a hard work-ing dame, and her ve-ry old Grand-Mo-ther who would have died long be-fore but for the kind ways of the child and her sim-ple Mo-ther, who had a Cot-tage on the Moor side, half a mile or more from her own low brown thatch-ed hut, by the skirt of the long, dark, green wood. The old-er wo-man out of the small sun she earn-ed by knit-ting, bought a smart red vel-vet hood, with a broad Cape to it, for her lov-ing Grand-child, and be-cause it was a hood made like those worn by per-sons who tra-vel in rain and storm, e-ve-ry one call-ed her "the Lit-tle Red Ri-ding Hood!" - One day Lit-tle Red Ri-ding Hood's mo-ther bak-ed bread and gave the child a clean bas-ket, a new batch cake, and a small pot of but-ter for Grand-mo-ther, and the lit-tle girl set off on her er-rand with much glee, for the Sun shone down, and the skies were blue, and all the banks up-on the road side were co-ver-ed with beau-ti-ful flow-ers.



A-way she went, skip-ping and sing-ing her wild songs, e-ve-ry now and then stoop-ing to add a-no-ther flow-er to the po-sy she had made of broom and rush-es and white star-flow-ers, when all of a sud-den there crept a wolf out of a thorn bush. He look-ed in her face so sli-ly, and smell-ed at her bas-ket so close-ly, and twin-kled his eye so fun-nily, and then he said "Good mor-row, fair Child! are you go-ing far up-on this road?" The lit-tle girl was not a-fraid be-cause he look-ed kind-ly and off-er-ed to play with her.—She told him all a-bout the cake and but-ter, and a-bout Grand-mo-ther, and how old she was, and where she liv-ed, and how soon she should be up-on her knee kiss-ing her a-gain and a-gain. The wolf look-ed at the child's ro-sy cheeks and cher-ry lips, and long-ed to eat her, for he was pinch-ed with hun-ger and she was plump and ten-der, but a wood-man was near, so he al-ter-ed his plan and said, "Bless me! the milk-man told me how poor-ly your Grand-mam-ma has been; I was not well my-self yes-ter-day, but I will go and vi-sit her to-day; you take that road, I will take this, and I lay you a pound of cher-ries I will be there the first." A-way he went swift as this-tle-down be-fore the wind, and left her walk-ing a-lone.

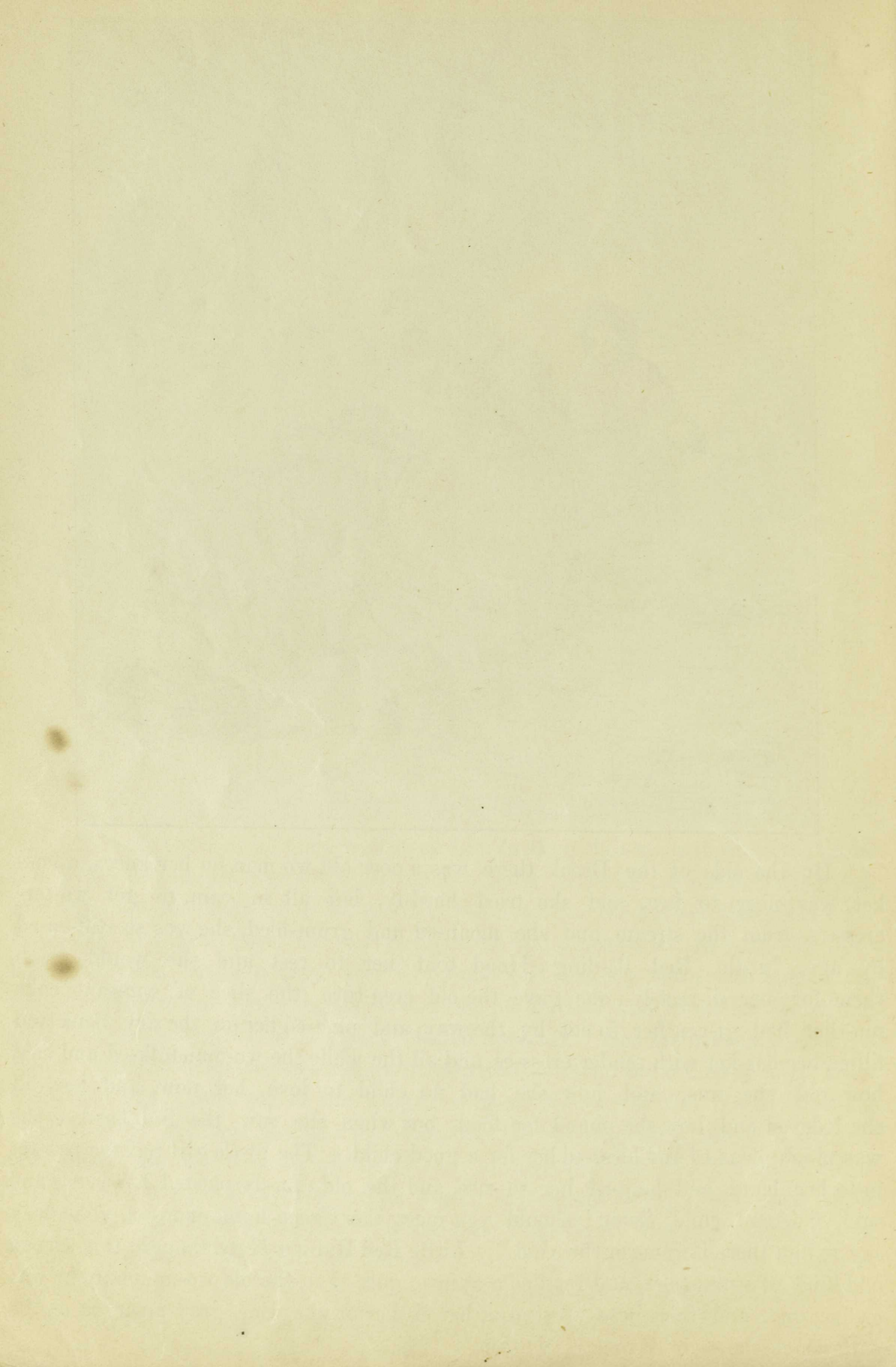


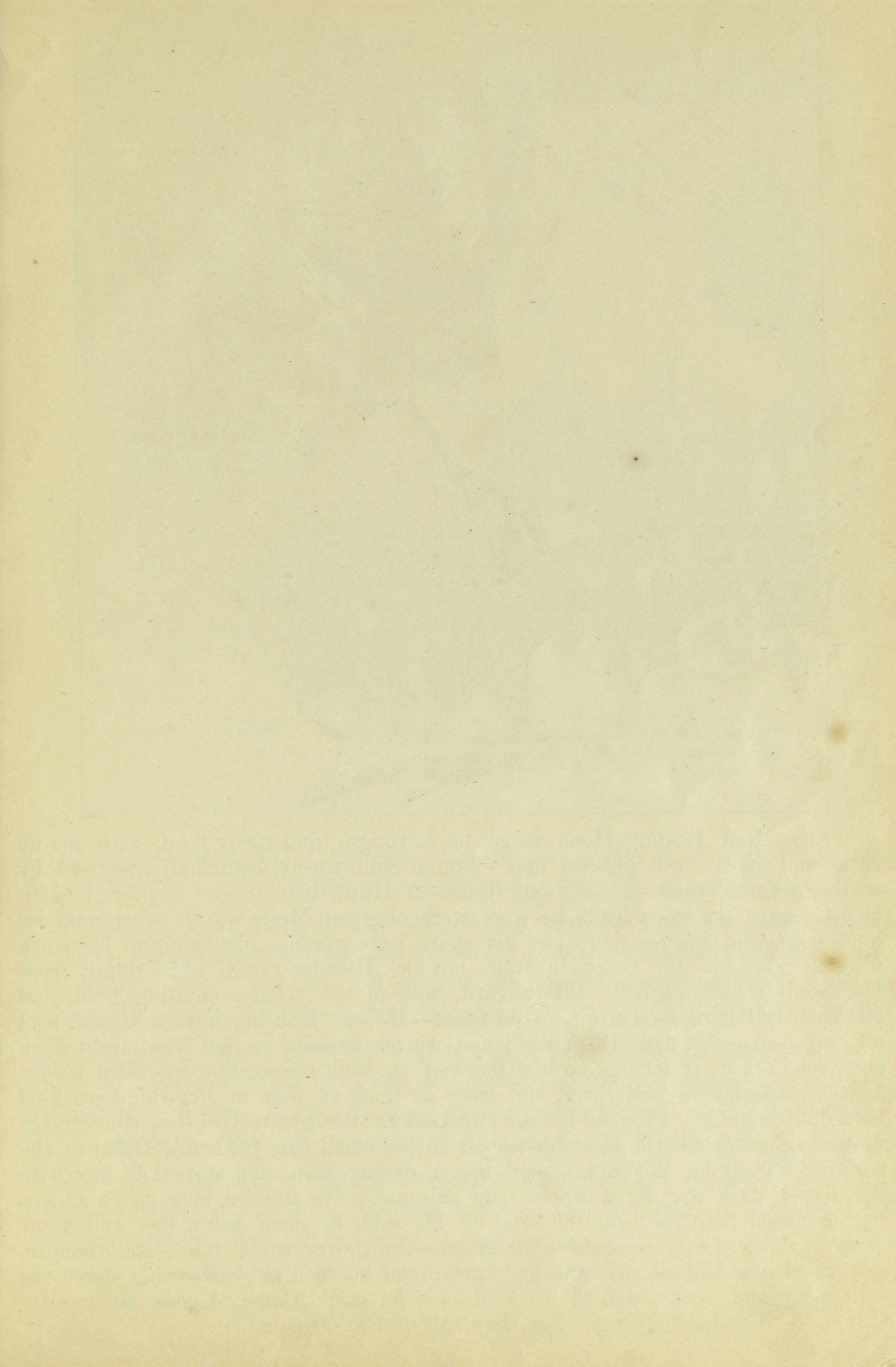


The wolf was old, he ve-ry well knew how lit-tle girls a-muse them-selves up-on a ram-ble, for soon she came to a pret-ty cool leaf-y place by the cor-ner of a wood, and there she rest-ed on a soft hil-lock, and put down her bas-ket and threw back her hood, and be-gan to twist the rich flow-ers she had pluck-ed by the road-side in-to love-ly wreaths, bind-ing them with i-vy stalks and deck-ing them with buds of the red and white ro-ses :— she put the wreaths round her hair, and round her waist, and round her neck, to see how best they look-ed upon her. She sat near to a bank cover-ed with wild straw-ber-ries and ga-ther-ed some of them, but a mer-ry lit-tle Tom-Tit came and eat them out of her fin-gers ;— some flow-ers of the Ho-ney-Suc-kle nod-ded o-ver her head, and she took them for her wreath, but a noi-sy Wasp set-tled up-on them and suck-ed all the Ho-ney at his ease. She did not fright-en a-way the Bird nor the Wasp, she was too hap-py to see them en-joy them-selves ; when they had fed they flew a-way, and she nod-ded “ Good-bye ! ” to them. Then all the birds in the wood were still, and lis-ten-ed, whilst she sang such sweet mu-sic as was ne-ver heard be-fore in the Sum-mer time, and when she had sung, she snatch-ed up her bas-ket and skip-ped a-long o-ver wild thyme and cur-ly moss, till she came to where wa-ter cress-es grew in a broad and peb-bly brook.



By the side of the Brook there was a poor old woman on her knees, a basket was near to her, and she tried hard-ly, but all in vain, to get wa-ter-cress-es from the stream, and she moan-ed and grum-bled, she was so stiff-en-ed by age. Lit-tle Red Ri-ding Hood told her to rest and she would reach them for her di-rect-ly; she gave the old crea-ture the slice of cur-rant cake mo-ther had gi-ven her to eat by the way, and plac-ed her on the dry bank and fill-ed her bas-ket with tender cress-es, and all the while the wo-man talk-ed and said how old she was, and how she had no child to love her now, and how ill she lodg-ed and how she pin-ed for food, but when she saw the full bas-ket she was much pleas-ed and bless-ed her for a good child. The lit-tle girl put the bas-ket in-to her hand and help-ed her to rise, and the old La-dy pat-ted her head and said, "listen! child, listen! should you meet the Green hunts-man on your way say to him there is game on the wind." Little Red Rid-ing Hood thought this was an odd kind of a mes-sage, and turn-ed a-gain to ques-ti-on the old wo-man but she was clean gone, and there was no sign of her ei-ther on the wide gray moor or on the path which she seem-ed to have cho-sen.







Soon Red Riding-Hood came to a rough and ugly road, with many rocks and many wet places, and upon a chill stony bank half covered by wither'd furze, there sat a silent beard-ed Hunts-man dress-ed in bright Lincoln-Green:—the ve-ry boots he wore were of green Mo-roc-co leather, and his long hose, and his fea-ther, and his spurs were green,—his hair and his teeth were as green as the Grass in June, but the Hun-ter's horn which hung from his shoul-der by a green Silk-en cord, was of the yel-low shin-ing gold, and all by it-self it play-ed a mourn-ful tune.—He sat look-ing in-to a Green pool all co-ver-ed o-ver with Duck weed and wa-ter dai-sies, so that you might have step-ped in-to it, it look-ed so like the turf we walk up-on, but speck-led wa-ter snakes leap-ed here and there, and frogs as thick as peas in Por-ridge croak-ed with-out ceas-ing. Fear-ful-ly she walk-ed to the green Hun-ter, who ne-ver no-tic-ed her at all till she whis-per-ed in his small ear, “There's Game in the wind!!!” Then he lift-ed his head like a dy-ing man, and star-ed at her with his sleep-y dark eye for a whole long mi-nute. He drew a long sharp ar-row with a green fea-ther from the sand by his side, he made her a bow and went a-way. How he went—where he went—she ne-ver could tell;—she thought she heard a sad lit-tle bell tink-ling near, and heard a Cock crow-ing o-ver the hills a-far and a-way, and it seem-ed as if he said “Come to poor Grand-Mo-ther!!!”—Per-haps it was what they call a Day-Dream!



Let us now speak of the wick-ed wolf; for what do you think he had done? Why, he made all the haste he could to find poor Grand-mo-ther's house, and he did find it, by the wood side, just as the lit-tle girl had told him. He bump-ed the door: "Who is there?" said the fee-ble old wo-man. The wolf tried to talk like Red Ri-ding Hood, and said, "I am here, Granny. I have brought you a cake and a pot of but-ter, but I can-not find the fas-ten-ing of the door." "Dear! Dear!" replied the old wo-man; "where are your wits, my child? pull the string, the latch will fly up; you must walk in!" The wolf did so, and the door was o-pen-ed at once; he jump-ed on the bed, she put her head un-der the clothes and cried mur-der! Yes, it was a most cru-el mur-der; only think, chil-dren, a wolf who had no-thing to eat for three days! he pull-ed the clothes down and gob-bled her up; he did not leave a bone; then he put on her pet-ti-coat and cap, and made all straight and crept in-to bed with the sheet over his nose; he smil-ed to think how he cheat-ed an old wo-man, and what a nice meal he should have out of the lit-tle pret-ty child.



The old wolf wait-ed for the child so long that he fell a-sleep, and slept as sound as an ap-ple tree for a quar-ter of an hour, while the ti-ny brown mice ran squeak-ing round the room as they were us-ed to do, for kind Grand-mam-ma would not keep a Pus-sy-Cat to kill a-ny of them. At last Lit-tle Red-Ri-ding-Hood peep-ed in at Grand-mam-ma's window but could not see any head up-on the pil-low, where Grand-mam-ma's head al-ways was ly-ing at that time in the day. Then she knock-ed at the door and wa-ken'd the wolf, who tried to talk like Grand-mam-ma, say-ing, " Pull the string, dear! up goes the latch! walk in!" The lit-tle girl as u-su-al ran at once to kiss her Grand-mam-ma, but wolf said, " what a good child you are to bring such a nice cake, and such nice but-ter, but just now I am ve-ry cold in-deed, so put the things on the ta-ble, and come in-to bed, my dar-ling! to keep me warm." So she put off her Red Vel-vet Hood, and put off her pin-a-fore, and made ready to cud-dle Grand-mam-ma, whilst the wick-ed wolf was rea-dy to die of laugh-ing.



But he was o-blig-ed to turn down the clothes to breathe, and the child was a-fraid and said, "Grand-mam-ma! Grand-mam-ma! what long arms you have got!" and the wolf answer-ed, "the bet-ter to hug thee, my child." The little girl then touch-ed the tips of the wolf's ears, and said, "Oh! Grand-mam-ma! dear Grand-mam-ma! what long ears you have got!" and the wolf grunt-ed and said, "the better to hear thee, my child;" and "Grand-mam-ma! what large eyes you have got!" "better to see thee, my child," said the wolf pet-tish-ly; and "Oh! Grand-mam-ma, what large sharp teeth you have got!" Here the im-pa-ti-ent beast jum-ped up to seize her, but he had hard-ly howl-ed "the bet-ter to eat thee, my child," when the wasp who had play-ed in the ho-ney-suc-kle flew in and stung the wolf in the eye, and the Tom-tit who ate the straw-ber-ries whist-led for the Green Hunt-ter, who shot the wolf to death with his long ar-row. Little Red Riding-hood said her e-ven-ing pray-ers at her mo-ther's knee, and did not sleep till she had thank-ed God for his mer-cy to her. I feel cer-tain that old wa-ter-cress dame was a fai-ry in dis-guise, and I think the wasp and the Tom-tit were good spi-rits, and I think the Green-hunts-man was the Fai-ries' servant. Good spi-rits fol-low good peo-ple in this world to keep them from e-vil things and evil ways, hop-ing al-ways to be their com-pa-ni-ons in the bright Ho-ly plac-es which God is keep-ing for those who love him be-fore all things, and for those who love all the li-ving things he has made.

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