

Red

The True Tale of Little Red Riding Hood

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Red

Once upon a time there lived, me, a girl with a cape the shade of the deepest red imaginable; you could even say it was the color of blood. I am known as Little Red Riding Hood. Everyone who knew me thought I was an angel sent from heaven, but in reality I was a demon sent by the devil himself. At least that's what I like to think.

"I wonder how they managed that shade of Red for her cape". The townspeople would whisper. If only they knew.

My grandmother tried over and over to stop me from doing malicious things, but she couldn't succeed. Me and my grandmother were both witches, I a witch of pure evil, she a witch of good. I was tired of my grandma interfering with my misdeeds, and so, I set out to capture her.

Four failed plans and one trap later, I had succeeded in capturing her. I was very well aware of my grandmother's power and knew that if I didn't reinforce the spells I had set to keep her imprisoned, she would escape. It was for this reason that I had been going through the woods to my grandmother's prison as I did every week. I had told the villagers that my grandmother had developed a mental illness and that once a week I had to go visit her with food and medicine. This was ingenious of course because no one questioned where I went or where my grandmother was.

Where are my parents in all of this you might ask? How do you think I got the color that uncannily resembles blood to dye my cape?

I didn't want anyone to be suspicious of me, so when I went to go visit my grandmother, I always took with me a large wicker basket. In the basket I put food, sweets, and some empty medicine holders. In the false bottom that it had, I put all the things I needed to reinforce my spells.

I, as you might imagine, was as happy as a demented little girl could be. My grandmother couldn't bother me, the townspeople were still gullible, and I was only a few steps away from having complete control over my town and everyone in it. Nobody but my wretched old granny knew this. In fact, I had actually found all of it quite amusing. How I love games when I benefit from them. I found it so amusing that sometimes I would wonder if I could takeover something bigger than the town, something much bigger.

"Patience," I would chastise myself, "Greed will end me."

When Saturday morning came, I got ready for the trip over the river and through the woods. I braided my hair into two braids, pinched my cheeks to make them rosy, and donned my cape, which still faintly smelled like iron to my keen nose. I was the perfect picture of innocence. On the way out of town, I was stopped once by the baker who gave me four cinnamon rolls. With the cinnamon rolls, I set off saying, "Nothing ever changes."

Grandma

I, grandma as they call me, couldn't talk; my granddaughter had turned me into a cat the color of untouched snow. Red had placed me into a small cage. Do to my non-opposable fingers, I could not perform the necessary magic to free myself. I probably could manage to

escape if I had the basket Red always brought to reinforce her spells, but I didn't and couldn't get that either. I had to think of a way to escape with only mental magic as a tool.

Today was the day she would come once again to reinforce the spells she had set. This encouraged me, as it did every week, to try harder to escape. I thought of what I could do, and then it came to me!

Once, I had saved a wolf, named Pira, from a hunter's trap. As a reward, the she-wolf had given me three favors.

"You have saved me once, but I shall return the favor thrice over. I swear it!" The she-wolf had said.

I had already used one of these favors, having asked the wolf to bring me three hairs from a golden dragon. I still had two favors awaiting me. I would ask the wolf to intercept Red and get the basket from her. It was far-fetched, but it was all I had.

All I needed was a bit of mental magic. I imagined the golden brown wolf in my mind's eye, the wolf's green eyes right in front of her and thought just one word, "Come." With a whisper like the wind, the wolf materialized before me.

"Thank you for using your magic to get here."

"I sensed the matter was urgent, and by the looks of it, it is. Now, what is the second favor you ask me?"

"I ask that you intercept my granddaughter on her way here, get the basket, and then get back to me before she does. I'd ask you to free me, but even you could not understand my granddaughters complex spells."

"Okay." And with that she slipped out the door.

I sighed, "That wolf, she never asks questions."

Pira

I could smell her before I could see her. She reeked of evil, hate, and blood. As she came into sight, it took all my willpower not to tear out her innocent looking little face. I jumped out at her.

“Hello little girl, are those goodies I smell in that basket?” I said choking back total disgust.

“They’re for my granny.” She said.

The way she said that, all innocent. I could rip out that pretty little face. Good thing I have self –control, or else I might not be able to stop myself from attacking.

I looked at the basket from the corner of my eye as I got slowly closer to Red. She looked suspiciously at me. That’s when I lunged, trying to put my claws around the basket. Her eyes flamed with anger, all innocence gone, she whispered something under her breath and then I was choking. It wasn’t like being suffocated; it was like she’d taken all the air from my body all at once. I couldn’t do anything. I tried to breath; even a small sniff would have made me the happiest mammal alive. I could feel my life force, being drained, no, evaporating. Soon it would be nothing, inexistent.

Just before I was completely done for, I used every bit of magic I had left to send a telepathic message, “Want to play a game?”

Red stopped. Gasping I struggled onto my paws only to fall, refusing to heal in her presence.

I can’t believe that worked. I stared at her, she stared right back.

Red

“A game?” I asked. I’ve always liked games. “What kind of game?”

“A racing game.” She gasped.

“It doesn’t sound fun.” I said.

“Then let’s make it interesting. Give me the basket, we’ll race to your granny’s, and if I beat you I get to keep the goodies, but if you beat me you get my life-long service.”

“You insolent fool, you know as well as I do what’s in that basket, but your offer tempts me.”

“You doubt yourself?” She didn’t answer my question.

“She tossed me the basket. Let it begin.” With that she started to run.

Pira

I grabbed the basket and healed myself as I ran but I could only do so much. Finally I reached granny’s prison. Luckily, I had gotten there first. I ran to granny, “I got it. What now?”

“Hand me the jasmine.” I handed her the jasmine.

“Now I need the sage and featherfly.” Granny said. Just then, the door opened.

Red

I stormed in, blind with rage. That wolf had used my love for games against me! “You senseless dog! You were in cahoots with her all along!” My hands shook, itching to get revenge. I shot a confusion charm at her, but she blocked it. This made me even madder than I was before. I screamed in frustration, sending spell after spell each of which she blocked.

“I can feel you weakening dog,” I screeched.

One of my spells finally came through, I took advantage of the opportunity, and sent her an extremely strong confusion spell. It worked, the dog couldn’t even remember her name. I grabbed my grandmother and went up to the wolf.

Grandma

“I was so close.”

Pira

The little girl came up to me. "Time to receive your prize." Then she handed me a cat. It was delicious.

Red

I sighed in relief. Grandma was gone, now for the wolf.

I'll have to get rid of her. I'll tell everyone I was too late. That the wolf ate granny, and a woodsman killed the wolf. I'll have to pay off the woodsman than eventually get rid of him to. Everyone will believe me. I'm Little Red Riding Hood. It will work.

If my short story wins the contest I, Maria Moreno, give permission for it to be posted on the Cavalcade of Authors website with my photo.