

# THE STORY MUSEUM

## Little Red Riding Hood

There was once a little girl who lived with her mother in a cottage on the edge of a great forest. She always wore a red cape with a hood, so everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood.

Little Red Riding Hood had a grandmother who lived in a cottage in a clearing in the forest. One morning her mother came to her and told her that her grandmother was ill.

'Take this basket of cakes to Grandma,' she said, 'but be careful! Stay on the path and don't wander into the forest.'

Little Red Riding Hood set off, swinging her basket and enjoying the sun shining through the trees. She turned a corner and there, leaning against a tree, was a large grey wolf. When he saw the girl in her red hood with her full basket he stepped towards her and he asked, 'Where are you going on this fine morning?'

'To Grandma's,' the girl said. 'She is ill and I am taking her these cakes.'

'How very thoughtful,' said the wolf. 'But the forest is full of flowers. Why not take Grandma a bunch? I'm sure she would love them.'

She would love flowers, thought Red Riding Hood, but to get them I would have to walk off the path and into the trees.

'Think how they would brighten up her bedroom,' continued the wolf, 'and how happy they would make her.'

I won't go far, thought Red Riding Hood. And I will be careful. And she stepped off the path and into the trees and began to gather a bunch of flowers.

The wolf meanwhile dashed along the path until he came to the cottage in the clearing. He knocked on the door, and a quavering voice called from inside, 'Who is it?'

'Why, Red Riding Hood!' called the wolf in a high voice.

'Come in,' called Grandma, and in he went, and when he saw the frail figure in the bed he gobbled her up in one big bite! He then found a nightgown and cap, put them on and tucked himself up in bed.

When Red Riding Hood came to the door she was a little surprised at how deep Grandma's voice had become. As she approached the bed she noticed that Grandma's voice wasn't the only thing that seemed different.

'Grandma, what big ears you have!' the little girl said.

'All the better to hear you with,' came the reply from the bed. She took a step nearer.

'Grandma, what big eyes you have!' the little girl said.

'All the better to see you with,' came the reply from the bed. She took one more step and stood by the pillow.

'Grandma, what big teeth you have!'

'All the better to eat you with!' cried the wolf, and he leapt out of bed and gobbled her whole!

The wolf lay back on the bed and fell fast asleep.

And that would have been the end of that, had not a passing woodcutter heard the wolf's snores and come into the cottage. Quickly he slit the wolf's bulging stomach and out jumped Red Riding Hood and Grandma, very glad to be out of there. To punish the wolf for his wickedness the woodcutter filled his stomach with stones while he slept. He sewed it back up with grandma's needle and thread, so that when the wolf woke with a great thirst and bent over the stream to drink he fell right in.