

Little Red

Ruffled up, pumpkin-colored mane appeared in the window. It looked left, it looked right, it plopped down on the edge.

"Wrr...!"

Two hands flew up, dragging out a freckled face.

"I need fresh air."

Young girl leaped out of the window, silently landing in the yard.

"Home before sundown! And don't leave the forest!", someone commanded.

"Yes, mother!"

Her lips twitched, struggling to keep shut. She ran to the fence gate and jumped over it. Her golden eyes glared, feet carved out pieces of soil.

Small clearing around the house turned into deep forest without transition. Sunlight struggled reaching all the way down the pines here, but she dashed through the branches without scratching herself. She did end up crushing an odd mushroom and upturning a moss or two, but that couldn't slow her down. Stomping on a big pine-cone could.

"Arf! You little..."

She kicked the cone away and looked around. Pines had to share space with oaks and beeches here. There was a line of raspberry bushes and the ground was covered in tall grass and ferns.

"Probably as far as I go anyway."

She sat on a round, mossy boulder. Elbows dug into thighs, wrists joined together, open palms formed a bowl for her chin to collapse into. Sulking pose complete, she closed her eyes and took a long, deep breath.

"Don't leave the forest! Don't be out late! Don't talk to humans! Don't this, don't that or anything else because I'm your stupid mother and my job is to make your life miserable!"

Something moved. Her head disappeared into her shoulders. She slowly turned around.

"...mother?"

The raspberries behind her chuckled.

"Nah, 's just me,"

"Woof! It's just you... you who?"

It was all red, small but somehow not laughable. It was flicking raspberries into its mouth.

"M'not a yoohoo. Name's Little Red. Red's'nuff."

It extended a hand at her. What does it mean? What is she supposed to do? She tilted her head but it didn't help much.

"Sorry I don't have anything to give you."

"Huh? Nah that's..."

It gulped down the remaining berries it held and cleared its throat.

"That's how we greet each other, ya know? Hold hands, shake a little. Try it."

She jumped off the boulder, carefully took the extended hand and swayed it left and right.

"Hellow!...like this?"

"Hi. It'll do. So... mother trouble, huh? Sounded tough."

"Oh, you heard me. Well, she is just so strict. Doesn't let me do anything, yells all the time, makes me do so many chores. Is everyone's mother like that?"

"Not really. Father? Siblings?"

"Father died when I was a cub, don't remember him at all. I tried to ask, but mother doesn't like talking about him. And I don't have any siblings either."

"...sorry. Just you two then. Where did you say you live?"

"See, that's the thing. Our house is over there, not even that deep into the forest. Just follow the pines as they get thicker. But I never see anyone passing through and we never have any visitors. Isn't that strange? I'm not allowed to have friends anyway. Mother says she worries about me, but... sometimes I feel like she's ashamed of me."

They both fell silent, which made her finally notice the singing birds. Solid blue patches of sky pierced the sparser canopy and warm breeze gave notice that spring is turning to summer. Tiny smile crept upon her face.

"...listen. Gotta go, you stay a while longer, 'kay? Bye."

"Awwkay, bye... can I see you again?"

No answer. She sat on the boulder again and resumed her sulking pose.

"Keep it together, Red! Start being emotional, end up like granny. That's right! Think of granny, think of the other kids. She might seem nice, but why would she be any different. She's still a wolf!"

Her small body whizzed through the forest, red cape barely keeping up. Instead of avoiding the trees, she ran straight into them and bounced off, never losing her momentum. Once the ground level became too dense, she zapped from crown to crown. She could smell the scent of her prey even before she saw the clearing. Is she turning into a predator?

"I'm not a predator. I'm not feral! Besides- no time, found the wolf!"

She slowly pulled the cape down. Her long, voluminous hair waved in the wind like a floating waterfall. They were blood red and made her riding hood look washed out in comparison. Her eyes fired up as they locked onto her target.

"Sunbathing without a care. Those breasts, those hips... she must have eaten at least ten. More like twenty if all children. Probably dreams of her next meal right now... Sorry, no more meals for you. 'cause I feel kinda peckish for a Big Bad Wolf! Aha-Ahahahaaa!"

The wolf-woman jolted up, still half-asleep.

"Thanks, much better angle."

Red dropped on her head from behind and swallowed it with a single gulp, shoulders with another. Her massive breasts were more of a challenge. They were so big it stretched her cheeks thin. She had to swallow with all her might to make them go down her throat. Rest of the body—slim waist and even the full hips—provided little resistance. She grabbed the legs and pushed the rest of the wolf-woman in, closing her lips as soon as she stuffed both feet into her mouth. One more slightly audible gulp. One loud and deliberate burp that startled the birds. She wiped off the drool that covered her jaw and gave her big belly a few praiseful pats.

"Hate to admit... for a monster, you were real tasty! Now, where did you say the bedroom is?"

She taunted her dinner to make it squirm even more. Calm head and strategic use of energy was the only hope to get out, but the wolves know next to nothing about being eaten themselves.

"Never mind, found it myself. Comfy! Wait, it's not like... made from human hair or something, eh?"

Her body assumed its usual sleeping position, which wasn't comfortable at all now that she was 'expecting'. Her kicking belly forced her to do some squirming of her own before she found a position good enough to rest her back a little. After all, she didn't plan to actually fall asleep. She wasn't done here yet.

"One down, one to go."

Red wasn't smiling anymore.

"Mother?"

Red began hoping the wolf-girl never comes back. She didn't feel good about this at all. But granny, children, purpose...! She had to do this. Still, it felt wrong.

"I'm in the bedroom."

Red closed her eyes and took a deep breath, preparing herself. She had to do this, right?

"Woof, it's dark as night in here! Want me to open the curtains for you?"

"N-no, just come here."

"You sound strange, are you sick? I'll bring you some water-"

"I said, come here and sit."

"Ok, ok. Let me grab a chair."

"Just sit on the stupid bed!"

"S-sorry, mother!"

"No, I'm sorry."

There was no exhilaration this time. The fact she wasn't even resisting made it so much worse. Something did flow down Red's cheeks, but it wasn't drool.

"Mother! What happened?"

"We've been eaten is what happened. By this little FREAK! Let us out!"

"Hey Wolf, where do you keep your food? Just realized I should check if you have any live humans here."

"Is that what's this about? Newsflash, freak, we don't eat humans! Check for yourself. End of the corridor."

She opened the pantry and looked around. No humans, live or dead. No blood on the walls. No trace of any meat whatsoever. But there's no way these wolves are innocent, is there?

"Seriously, Red, I can't believe you're still hungry! By the way, if you're not into veggies like me - check the small door behind the barrel."

"SHUT UP YOU-!!!"

"This one? Let's see, what do we ha- oh god."

She slammed the door shut and walked back to the corridor as fast as her gut allowed her. Her face was white. She leaned her back against the wall. Poor children.

"Girl, please tell me you never ate anything from there..."

"Nope, that is mother's special food. Just thought it shouldn't go to waste."

The wolf-woman went ballistic.

"I hate you! You destroyed my life! Why, why did the pack insist we keep you alive? A half-breed! I wanted to raise my own child, not some random bastard my husband drags in!"

"You... aren't my mother?"

"As if! Wait a minute... it doesn't matter now! I should thank the freak for letting me have my revenge, even if it's the last thing I do!"

"Mother, what are you...?"

"Ey, what's going on in there?"

"Help, Red! She wants to swallo--"

"Hang on, girl!"

Red pushes her hand in her throat and drags out the first thing she can grab... Mother? Daughter? Both - she already ate her daughter! Red's eyes ignite. Clapsed hands smash into mother's face. Kick to her side turns her on stomach. Red furiously jumps on her back over and over.

"Let her out this instant!"

The mother huffs, hurks and hurls.

"Ya hear me?"

"...Red."

"Guess you wanna see what I look like when I'm angry for real!"

"Red! I got out already!"

"Huh...? Oh! Well... here's for good measure!"

She stomps on her back one more time, then climbs down.

"Now I'm gonna... you know... you don't have to watch this, 'kay?"

Unsure how fast the wolf-woman could get back on her feet, Red quickly put those in her mouth.

"Yuck, first time eating somethin' I already ate."

She began stuffing the legs back inside. Thighs, hips and slim waist took only a few gulps, but the over-sized breasts went down as slow as before. Red lifted herself and let the mothers' head and arms slide down mostly on their own. Finally, the hands disappeared into her mouth. She swallowed hard one more time.

The wolf-girl was about to say something, but Red gestured with her hands to wait. Face twisted in all directions, she let out her most disgusting burp ever.

"Ewww... uhh, what did you wanna say?"

"So, I was thinking. Could you please wait until she's digested before you eat me again?"

The fight made it seem so clear-cut, but why did she save this girl again? Deep down, Red was already convinced and she knew it. Is that enough though? Bring a wolf back home based on her own feelings? Don't worry people, she's harmless. I can feel it! Red didn't expect to ever even consider something like that.

"I ask you, you answer. Must be completely honest, 'k?"

Perking up, the girl sat on her knees and looked at Red expectedly.

"Ready!"

"Feel like eating a human?"

"I don't know, haven't even seen one yet."

"Right, right... different question."

What if that innocent smile is the same smile she would have after killing a child or two? Red felt the girl wouldn't do that. Red knew it. Maybe she could let her live in this house? The pack would probably take her away. She wouldn't be safe here.

"Red?"

"Y-yeah?"

"What is the different question?"

"Different question... Girl, I need you to say something that would convince me I can trust you. But I have no idea what that is! Help me out..."

"Sorry, I..."

"You can do it girl, think of somethin'...I can trust you because...?"

Red puts on her best supportive smile, extends a hand and waits for the wolf-girl to finish the sentence with something revelatory.

"Oh, I know this one!"

The girl holds the hand and shakes it with a beaming smile.

"Hellow!"

Red finally realized her inner conflict was pointless. There's no way she could ever bring herself to hurt this cute thing anyway. It will have to work somehow. She will make it work. Completely out of words, Red's eyes began to water.

"Oh no, you're crying. I messed up, didn't I."

"Girl, you made it!"

"Yay! Do we wait here then, or...?"

"Wait for what?"

"Wait for mother to digest so you could eat me. Since I got the question right."

"Noo...!"

Red hugged her. It looked nice and sweet inside her head, but the bloated gut made it awkward.

"Um... what are we doing?"

"You don't know what a hug is...?"

Two watery eyes looked up at the clueless wolf-girl. She didn't. Red crossed the breaking point and began bawling uncontrollably.

"Noone'sh e'er gonna huwt you—*sniff*—hear me? I wuv u!"

"Wahaha, I'm so confused right now, but ok! ...tissue?"

"...yesh pwease."

"Woof, no wonder you hate us wolves!"

"Them. Them wolves. Never count yourself as one of them again. 'specially when I'm not around! Even good people can do very bad things when they feel scared, ya know."

"Right, sorry. But they sure picked the wrong one to mess with! I love that you look so small and cute, yet you hunt down wolves like it's nothing!"

"I wouldn't say nothi- I'm cute?"

"You are! Especially with the cape down, like this-"

She pulled it down, letting the blood-red waves pour out.

"See? Oh, I haven't noticed before. Even your cheeks are red! Whoever came up with your name knew what they're doing."

"...thanks, I guess. Speaking of names, I still don't know yours!"

"Pumpkin!"

They slowly reached the edge of the forest. For the rest of the trip-

"Woof, what's that?"

What was she looking at?

"Can I eat it, Red?"

Seriously, what are they talking about.

"Sure! Go ahead. Ain't nobody gonna miss it."

I don't like where this is going. Is she...?

"Aaaahhnn....!"

THE END, THE EN-

GULP