



*How the Three Wild
Babylonian Baboons Went
Away in the Rain Eating
Bread and Butter*

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One morning when Hatrack the Horse went away from his shanty, he put three umbrellas in the corner next to the front door. His pointing finger pointed at the three umbrellas as he said, "If the three wild Babylonian Baboons come sneaking up to this shanty and sneaking through the door and sneaking through the house, then all you three umbrellas open up like it was raining, jump straight at the baboons and fasten your handles in their hands. Then, all three of you stay open as if it was raining—and hold those handles in the hands of the baboons and never let go till I come." Hatrack the Horse went away. The three umbrellas stood in the corner next to the front door. And when the umbrellas listened they could hear the three wild Babylonian Baboons sneaking up to the shanty. Soon the baboons, all hairy all over, bangs down their foreheads, came sneaking through the door. Just as they were sneaking through the door they took off their hats to show they were getting ready to sneak through the house. Then the three umbrellas in the corner opened up as if it was raining; they jumped straight at the three wild Babylonian Baboons;

and they fastened their handles tight in the hands of the baboons and wouldn't let go. So there were the three wild Babylonian Baboons, each with a hat in his left hand, and an open umbrella in his right hand. When Hatrack the Horse came home he came, quiet. He opened the front door, quiet. Then he looked around inside the house, quiet. In the corner where he had stood the three umbrellas, he saw the three wild Babylonian Baboons on the floor, sleeping, with umbrellas over their faces. "The umbrellas were so big they couldn't get through the door," said Hatrack the Horse. For a long time he stood looking at the bangs hanging down the foreheads of the baboons while they were sleeping. He took a comb and combed the bangs down the foreheads of the baboons. He went to the cupboard and spread bread and butter. He took the hats out of the left hands of the baboons and put the hats on their heads. He put a piece of bread and butter in the hand of each baboon. After that he snipped each one across the nose with his finger {snippety-snip! just like that}.

They opened their eyes and stood up. Then he loosened the umbrella handles from their right hands and led them to the door. They all looked out. It was raining. “Now you can go,” he told the baboons. And they all walked out of the front door, and they seemed to be snickering and hiding the snickers. The last he saw of them they were walking away in the rain eating bread and butter. And they took off their hats so the rain ran down and slid off on the bangs of their foreheads. Hatrack the Horse turned to the umbrellas and said, “We know how to make a surprise party when we get a visit from the Babylonian with their bangs falling down their foreheads—don’t we?” That is what happened, as Hatrack the Horse told it to the night policeman in the Village of Cream Puffs.

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