



The Old Woman and the Crooked Sixpence

Folk-Lore And Legends: English

English

Easy
3 min read

An old woman was sweeping her house, and she found a crooked sixpence.

“What,” says she, “shall I do with this sixpence? I will go to the market and buy a pig with it.”

She went; and as she was coming home she came to a stile. Now the pig would not go over the stile. The woman went on a little further and met a dog—

“Dog,” said she, “bite pig. Piggy won’t go over the stile, and I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the dog would not bite the pig. The woman went on a little further, and she met a stick.

“Stick,” said she, “beat dog. Dog won’t bite pig, piggy won’t go over stile, and I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the stick would not. The woman went on a little further, and she met a fire.

“Fire,” said she, “burn stick. Stick won’t beat dog, dog won’t bite pig, piggy won’t go over the stile, and I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the fire would not. The woman went on a little further and she met some water.

“Water,” said she, “quench fire. Fire won’t burn stick, stick won’t beat dog,” etc.

But the water would not. The woman went on a little further, and she met an ox.

“Ox,” said she, “drink water. Water won’t quench fire,” etc.

But the ox would not. The woman went on again, and she met a butcher.

“Butcher,” said she, “kill ox. Ox won’t drink water,” etc.

But the butcher would not. The woman went on a little further, and met a rope.

“Rope,” said she, “hang butcher. Butcher won’t kill ox,” etc.

But the rope would not. Again the woman went on, and she met a rat.

“Rat,” said she, “gnaw rope. Rope won’t hang butcher,” etc.

But the rat would not. The woman went on a little further, and met a cat.

“Cat,” said she, “kill rat. Rat won’t gnaw rope,” etc.

“Oh,” said the cat, “I will kill the rat if you will fetch me a basin of milk from the cow over there.”

The old woman went to the cow and asked her to let her have some milk for the cat.

“No,” said the cow; “I will let you have no milk unless you bring me a mouthful of hay from yonder stack.”

Away went the old woman to the stack and fetched the hay and gave it to the cow. Then the cow gave her some milk, and the old woman took it to the cat.

When the cat had lapped the milk, the cat began to kill the rat, the rat began to gnaw the rope, the rope began

to hang the butcher, the butcher began to kill the ox, the ox began to drink the water, the water began to quench the fire, the fire began to burn the stick, the stick began to beat the dog, the dog began to bite the pig, and piggy, in a fright, jumped over the stile, and so, after all, the old woman got safe home that night.

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