

1812

**GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES
THE OLD WITCH**

Jacob Ludwig Grimm and Wilhelm Carl Grimm

Grimm, Jacob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) - German philologists whose collection "Kinder- und Hausmarchen," known in English as "Grimm's Fairy Tales," is a timeless literary masterpiece. The brothers transcribed these tales directly from folk and fairy stories told to them by common villagers. The Old Witch (1812) - A disobedient girl goes to see an old witch despite her parents threats and warnings. At the witch's house the girl is frightened by what she sees.

THE OLD WITCH

THERE WAS once a little girl who was very obstinate and wilful, and who never obeyed when her elders spoke to her; and so how could she be happy? One day she said to her parents, "I have heard so much of the old Witch, that I will go and see her. People say she is a wonderful old woman, and has many marvelous things in her house; and I am very curious to see them." Her parents, however, forbade her going, saying, "The Witch is a wicked old woman, who performs many godless deeds; and if you go near her, you are no longer a child of ours." The girl however, would not turn back at her parents' command, but went to the Witch's house. When she arrived there the woman asked her, "Why are you so pale?" "Ah," replied she, trembling all over, "I have frightened myself so with what I have just seen." "And what did you see?" inquired the old Witch.

"I saw a black man on your steps." "That was a collier," replied she.

"Then I saw a gray man." "That was a sportsman," said the old woman.

"After him I saw a blood-red man." "That was a butcher," replied the woman.

"But oh, I was most terrified," continued the girl, "when I peeped through your window, and saw not you, but a creature with a fiery head." "Then you have seen the Witch in her proper dress," said the old woman. "For you I have long waited, and now you shall give me light." So saying, she changed the girl into a block of

wood, and then threw it into the fire; and when it was fully alight she sat down on the hearth, warmed herself, and said, "Ah, now for once it burns brightly!"

THE END