



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Old Woman Work-Away

Laura Rountree Smith

Old Woman Work-Away was always spinning. In the fall of the year she began to think about Thanksgiving, singing:

"Spinning, spinning, round and round,
Goes the wheel with pleasant sound,
Hurry, hurry, come spin ahead,
And buy for me cranberries red!"

Just as she was thinking about her Thanksgiving dinner, "Rap, a, tap," sounded on the door, and in came Tinkle Bell, the fairy elf. The little bell on his cap went "Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle," and he said:



"How do you sell your spinning to-day?
I am Tinkle Bell; I will take it away."

The Old Woman replied:

"I'll sell it for some fairy gold,
You've plenty of that, so I am told."

Tinkle Bell took off his cap and shook it.

Out came a pile of fairy gold. He went off with the woven cloth and the little bell on his cap tinkled all the way.

The Old Woman was thinking now she had money enough to buy cranberries for Thanksgiving dinner, when “Rap, a, tap” was heard on the door, and in came Tiny-Tail, the rabbit, shivering with cold. He sang:

“My name is Little Tiny-Tail,
I need a new coat without fail.”

The Old Woman made him warm his paws by the fire. She could see he needed a new fur coat for winter sure enough. By and by she counted out all her fairy gold, and sent him home with a bag full so he could buy a winter coat.



The Old Woman went back to her spinning wheel singing:

“Spinning, spinning round and round,
Goes the wheel with pleasant sound:
Hurry, hurry, come fill my pot
With a nice plum pudding hot!”

She soon had a pretty mat woven, and in came Tinkle Bell and paid her as before. She felt sure she would have plum pudding for Thanksgiving dinner, when, “Rap, a, tap,” sounded on the door, and Bushy-Tail, the old squirrel, came limping in. He said:

“If winter clothing I could choose,
I’d buy two pairs of over shoes.”

The Old Woman knew as well as you or I that overshoes cost money, but she loved all the animals in the woods so she let Bushy-Tail help himself to her fairy gold, and he went off to buy overshoes.



The Old Woman began to spin as before, singing:

“Spinning, spinning, round and round,
Goes the wheel with pleasant sound;
Hurry, hurry and don’t mistake
Spin enough to buy a cake.”

When she had a pretty mat made Tinkle Bell came and bought it as before, and she said, “Now, I have my cake for Thanksgiving dinner.”

“Rap, a, tap,” sounded on the door and in walked Hug-Me-Tight, the bear, saying, as he brushed the snow from his fur and whiskers:

"Before I curl up for my nap,
I need a brand new warm night-cap."

The Old Woman knew he wanted to sleep all winter and she thought how cold his ears would get, so she let him have money for a brand new night-cap.

The Old Woman began to spin so hard that her spinning wheel went "Whir, whir, whir!" She had given away all her fairy gold, and Thanksgiving was coming nearer and nearer and she sang:

"Spinning, spinning, round and round,
Goes the wheel with pleasant sound,
Hurry, hurry, come weave a mat,
And buy for me a turkey fat!"

Tinkle Bell came and bought the mat and left a pile of gold as before. The Old Woman thought if she had no more visitors she could buy a fat turkey.

"Rap, a, tap," sounded and in came Foxy-Loxy, the friendly Fox saying:

"Spectacles, without a rim,
I need—my eyes are growing dim."

Now, the Old Woman did not want to give away all her fairy gold; but her own eyes were growing dim and she had to wear spectacles, so she felt sorry for Foxy-Loxy and let him count out her gold, and take it all away.

The Old Woman set the spinning wheel in the corner. She was tired spinning. Her head went nid, nid, nodding and she fell asleep.



At this very minute Tiny-Tail, Bushy-Tail, Hug-Me-Tight, and Foxy-Loxy met Tinkle Bell in the woods, and they showed their new possessions.

They all shouted, "We are so thankful!"

Tinkle Bell rang the tiny bell on his cap to bring them to order, saying:

"Old Woman Work-Away,
Will have no dinner Thanksgiving Day,
Unless her good deeds you recall,
And fill her basket now, this fall."

Those comical little animals jumped up and down and Tiny-Tail said:

"I've cabbages, so fresh and nice,
I'll take them to her in a trice."

Bushy-Tail said:

“A bag of nuts I’ve stored away,
They’ll help her on Thanksgiving Day.”

Hug-Me-Tight said:

“Though to-day I have no money
I’ll give to her a pot of honey.”

Foxy-Loxy said:

“There are turkeys in my den,
For four and twenty gentlemen.”

At that, they all laughed for they knew he meant to send the Old Woman a fine, fat turkey.

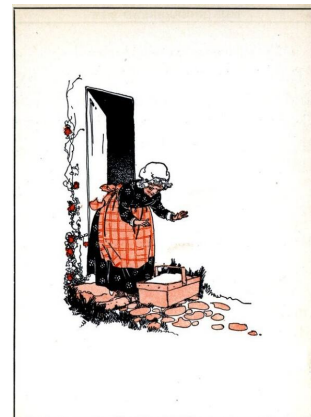
Tinkle Bell said:

“Other things for Thanksgiving Day
I’ll put in the basket without delay.”

He bought cranberries, cake and plum pudding.

Old Woman Work-Away heard a “Rap, a, tap” on the door by and by, and as she was still half asleep, she was slow to open the door. When she got there, she found a basket full of good things.

She might never have known where it came from, if she had not found a tiny card on which was written:



“From your woodland folks so merry and gay,
We wish you a happy Thanksgiving Day.”

She looked about to see who was hiding in the bushes.

She could see no one, but she heard a tiny bell ring, “Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle.”

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