What Really Happened To Little Red

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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Once upon a time (original, eh?) there was a little girl who had a red cape. This young lady was on her way to her grandma's house with a basket of food because grandma was hungry and too lazy to feed herself. Little Red, as she liked to call herself, had to go through the woods to get to grandma's house because that's the kind of story this is."

Cover Page Footnote

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Maranda: What Really Happened To Little Red

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Once upon a time (original, eh?) there was a little girl who had a red cape. This young lady was on her way to her grandma's house with a basket of food because grandma was hungry and too lazy to feed herself. Little Red, as she liked to call herself, had to go through the woods to get to grandma's house because that's the kind of story this is.

On the way Red was singing a new song she had wrote,
“A basket, a basket,
A green and yellow basket.
I put a letter on the top
And on the way I dropped it.
I dropped it, I dropped it,
A little boy picked it up
And put it in his pocket . . .”

Yeah, the chick finally cooked. But it was this very tune that got Red in trouble. The wolf (dramatic incidental music) appeared from behind a tree Red had just passed and decided that it was lunch time. He figured that he had three options: he could steal the basket and eat the food, he could steal Red and eat her, or he could steal the song and make a bundle and never be hungry again.

Being pretty smart as far as wolves go he decided stealing the song would be infinitely better. After all the food would be gone in ten minutes, if that and Red would probably only last through the evening. But the song had potential, with the proper promotion of course. So he set off towards Red's mellifluous voice.

Now, at this point, the wolf knew what his goal was and . . . he had a plan. He'd make friends with her, get her to invite him home, slip her a mickey, ransack the house for the sheet music and split. Simple, yet, effective. Very effective indeed. He set off in the direction of her voice and soon came upon her skipping along. Red was actually not one to skip along but she had gotten a blister on her foot from the long walk and it helped keep the pressure off the bad foot. The wolf followed her at a distance, slinking behind trees, hiding in shadows and other assorted wolf nonsense until she'd finally had it and sat down for a rest. The wolf decided that the best approach was to ask her about her health and see if he could be of service (a little galantry couldn't hurt). He began to clear his throat so Red wouldn't clobber him with the basket for snaking up on her.

"Pardon me, madam, if you are in some kind of distress please allow me to be of assistance."

Pretty smooth, huh?

Red had only heard that kind of talk on television, so she looked up at him as if he was out of his tree (which was odd because Wolfy never really hung out in the trees that much). However, she thought, if he was so anxious to be of assistance, maybe she could get him to take the basket to grandma's house for her.

"Oh sir," she began, trying to remember how they sounded in "Cyrano de Bergerac," "Perhaps you would be so kind as to deliver this basket of food to my grandmother (emphasis on the second 'ma'). She is ill and has nobody to care for her." She also wanted to mention that Granny eats like a horse and doesn't care.

The wolf happily accepted and took the basket, telling Red that he would return the basket the first chance that he had. She hesitantly got up, shrugged her shoulders and skipped off for home. The wolf, of course, waited until she was out of sight and sat down to eat. There was fried chicken, biscuits, potato salad and some rhubarb pie. No doubt about it . . . Red was a rotten cook but at least he was full. All he had to do now was show up at Red's house.

Meanwhile, Red had been home for about an hour soaking her foot when grandma called and inquired where her food was. Red explained the situation and told Granny to call out for a pizza and have it put on Red's tab. After Red had hung up on grandma she began to wonder why the wolf's motives more closely and she decided that maybe it wasn't a really groovy idea to have given him her address (bright isn't she?).

I'd better invite the guys over, just in case." she mumbled to herself. She picked up the phone again and began to dial. See, she worked with a band called 'Big Red and the Stubmuffs' (a motley bunch of hoods with hearts of gold) and even though they weren't rehearsing tonight, she knew right where to find them. When the other end was picked up she asked the voice for Dizzy. Through the stagnant air of the pool hall that floated between Dizzy and the phone she managed to discern the other voices she wanted to hear. After the conversation ended, Dizzy rounded up the guys and hauled off in their '72 Willysco named 'White Flash'. In no time at all they were outside Red's door. She ushered the guys into the kitchen to hide, and gave them the basics of the plan. She would make an excuse to leave the room, if the wolf gave any hint of monkey business . . . jump him. The boys did what they were told and sat quiet until the doorbell rang.

The wolf had come-a-courting.

Red greeted him cordially and told him that he shouldn't have brought the bottle of champagne, but she was glad he did. Being the suave little wolf, though, was a fast mother. No doubt about it. The wolf gave any hint of monkey business . . . jump him. The boys did what they were told and sat quiet until the doorbell rang.

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"Pardon me, madam, if you are in some kind of distress please allow me to be of assistance."

Pretty smooth, huh?

Red had only heard that kind of talk on television, so she looked up at him as if he was out of his tree (which was odd because Wally never really hung out in the trees at all). However, she thought, if he was so anxious to be of assistance, maybe she could get him to take the basket to grandma's house for her.

“Oh sir,” she began, trying to remember how they sounded in “Cyrano de Bergerac,” “Perhaps you would be so kind as to deliver this basket of food to my grandma (emphasis on the second ‘ma’). She is ill and has nobody to care for her.” She also wanted to mention that granny eats like a horse but decided against it.

The wolf happily accepted and took the basket, telling Red that he would return the basket the next chance that he had. She hesitantly got up, shrugged her shoulders and skipped off for home. The wolf, of course, waited until she was out of sight and sat down to eat. There was fried chicken, biscuits, potato salad and some rhubarb pie. No doubt about it . . . Red was a rotten cook but at least he was full. All he had to do now was show up at Red's house.

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The wolf had come-a-courting.

Red greeted him cordially and told him that he shouldn't have brought the bottle of champagne, but she was glad he did. Being the suave little &*#! that he was, the wolf bowed and replied, "Twas nothing at all, my dear."

It was just lucky for Red that Wally didn't hear the guys gagging away in the kitchen.

Anyway, Red asked him to have a seat and went into the kitchen for some glasses. While she was out of the room, the wolf pulled a tiny vial of sleeping powder out of wherever wolves keep things like that, ready to slip into her drink when her back was turned. When she returned, he poured as she sat in a chair on the opposite side of the room from him. They were actually both a little uncomfortable, knowing that they were trying to put one over on each other. So, besides some general throat clearing, not much else was happening. One could call it a definitely less than thrilling encounter.

Needless to say, the naines in the kitchen were getting restless. They had the door open just enough so they could see out into the living room, and they were all crouched up on each other in a pile so that each one could get a good look. It was about ten minutes into the boredom when Dizzy got a charley horse and began to tip over. Since he was at the bottom you can pretty much guess what would happen when he gave out.

Total disaster.

With Dizzy down, all the weight of the gang rested on Mongo. When he got flattened, Iggy tipped and took Ezekiel with him taking out three potted plants and the microwave oven stand. Finally, Island (the one who always wore plaid Bermuda shorts) collapsed and hit his head on the stove causing hot water to spill on his bare legs.

When the wolf heard all the commotion, he jumped and made a beeline for the door. In the midst of the melee, the guys managed to untangle themselves and charged the wolf. Of Wally, though, was a last mother. No doubt about it. Unfortunately for him, though, one of the disadvantages of having a tail is that it's never quite up to where you are and when Red got the amazing presence of mind to slam the door on the wolf's tail, he got snagged.

He was caught, oh boy was he caught. Oh cripe did that hurt. Not being one to hide his feelings, the wolf let out a scream that could have woke grandma at the
other end of the forest. Red opened the door and the wolf fell to the ground panting. Just when he thought he'd bought the farm for sure, the guys came bounding out the door yelling, "That's it! That's the sound! Oh yeah! Bitchin'!" With tears in his eyes, the wolf got up on his knees, "Pleeeease don't kill me! I promise I'll be good. I'll never bother you again, I'll bring food to grandma, I'll, I'll, I'll even get a ninety-nine year subscription to *Rolling Stone*!"

"Kill you?" asked Island, "Whose talking about killing you? That sound you made . . . can you do it again, like, without getting a door slammed on your tail?"

The wolf looked at the beaming faces and figured these guys were a few cards short of a full deck . . . probably a couple suits, at least . . . maybe more. He felt he didn't have much choice, though and let out a couple of screams until he remembered his Stanislavski training and recreated the pain in his mind. The result was fantastic.

The Studmuffins began to jump and scream and have a basically good time, pumping the wolf's paw vigorously and slapping him sharply across the back of the head a couple of times. The wolf managed to break away from the group long enough for one question, "Pardon me for interrupting but just what the hell is going on here?"

Dizzy, being the sharpest member of the group (which isn't saying a helluva lot), brought his exuberance under control and blurted out, "That sound! That sound! That sound!"

Red finally intervened and informed the wolf that there was a particular sound the group couldn't seem to make on their synthesizer. They knew that it was just the particular sound they needed to make a million dollar smash out of the tune they'd just written . . . and it was the sound he had just made. Since they knew the wolf wasn't going anywhere, Red and the guys stepped up on the porch for a quick meeting. A little while later, Red returned and explained their proposition to the wolf. They wanted him to join the band as a permanent member, but since he's been basically rotten he had to make up for it by bringing grandma lunch four times a week. If he agreed, they'd let him live. If not, they'd wear him next winter.

It was certainly an offer he couldn't refuse.

About a month later, a very famous disc jockey named Jack, who had empathy for wolf sounds, heard the tune. He was about to promote it into a mega-smash which made 'Red and the Studmuffins' real happy. Now Red's got a new mink cape, the boys all have their own Mercedes, grandma has a live-in servant and the wolf was able to have plastic surgery done on his tail.

And they all lived happily ever after.

The End