

## **The Little Red House with No Doors and No Windows and a Star Inside**

Once upon a time, there was a little boy who was tired of all his toys and tired of all his play. "What shall I do?" he asked his mother. And his mother, who always knew beautiful things for little boys to do said, "You shall go on a journey and find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside." This really made the little boy wonder. Usually his mother had good ideas, but he thought that this one was very strange. "Which way shall I go?" he asked his mother. "I don't know where to find a little red house with no doors and no window. "Go down the lane past the farmer's house and over the hill," said his mother, "and then hurry back as soon as you can and tell me all about your journey."

So the little boy put on his cap and his jacket and started out. He had not gone very far down the lane when he came to a merry little girl dancing in the sunshine. Her cheeks were like pink blooms' petals and she was singing like a robin. "Do you know where I shall find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside?" asked the little boy. The girl laughed, "Ask my father, the farmer," she said. "Perhaps he knows."

So the little boy went on until he came to the great brown barn where the farmer kept barrels of fat potatoes and baskets of yellow squashes and golden pumpkins. The farmer himself stood in the doorway looking out over the green pastures and yellow grain fields. "Do you know where I shall find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside?" asked the little boy of the farmer. The farmer laughed too. "I lived a great many years and I never saw one." he chuckled," but ask Granny who lives at the foot of the hill. She knows how to make molasses, taffy, popcorn balls, and red mittens! Perhaps she can direct you."

So the little boy went on farther still, until he came to the Granny, sitting in her pretty garden of herbs and marigolds. She was wrinkled as a walnut and as smiling as the sunshine. "Please, Dear Granny," said the little boy. "Where shall I find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside?" Granny was knitting a red mitten, and when she heard the little boy's question, she laughed so cheerily that the wool ball rolled off her lap and down the little pebbly path. "I should like to find that little house myself," she chuckled. "I would be warm when the frosty night comes and the starlight would be prettier than a candle. But ask the wind that blows about so much and listens at all the chimneys. Perhaps the wind can direct you."

So the little boy took off his cap and tipped it politely to the Granny and went on up the hill rather sorrowfully. He wondered if his mother, who usually knew almost everything, had perhaps made a mistake. The wind was coming down the hill as the little boy climbed up. As they met, the wind turned about and went along, singing beside the little boy. It whistled in his ear, and pushed him and dropped a pretty leaf into his hand. "I wonder," thought the little boy, after they had gone along together for awhile, "if the wind could help me find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside." The wind cannot speak in our words, but it went singing ahead of the little boy until it came to an orchard. There it climbed up in the apple tree and shook the branches. When the little boy caught up, there at his feet laid a great rosy apple.

The little boy picked up the apple. It was as much as his two hands could hold. It was red as the sun had been able to paint it, and the thick brown stem stood up as straight as a chimney, and it had no doors and no windows. Was there a star inside?

The little boy called to the wind, "Thank you," and the wind whistled back, "You're welcome." Then the little boy gave the apple to his mother. His mother took a knife (**at this point, start cutting an apple crosswise**) and cut the apple through the center. Oh, how wonderful! There inside the apple, lay a star holding brown seeds.

"It is too wonderful to eat without looking at the star, isn't it?" the little boy said to his mother. "Yes indeed," answered his mother.

~ By Caroline Sherwin Bailey