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George's Marvellous Medicine

LEVEL 5

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'I'm going shopping,' George's mother said. 'Be a good boy. And don't forget to give your grandmother her medicine at eleven o'clock!'

Eight-year-old George Kranky was bored. He lived on a farm a long way from the village, so there were no other children to play with. He had no brothers or sisters. And he did not like living with his grandmother. Most grandmothers are kind and loving, but not this one. She was a selfish, grumpy old woman.



Grandma sat in her chair all day. She never smiled or said anything nice. She frightened George. And she was *really* nasty when his parents were out.



‘Come here and I’ll tell you secrets,’ she said with a cold smile. ‘Don’t be afraid of your old grandmother.’ She laughed. ‘I have magic powers. I can change the shapes of animals – and little children too.’

George wanted to run away, but he could not move. Was his grandmother a witch?

'I can change *your* shape,' Grandma said, 'or I can make teeth grow out of your fingers.' George's eyes grew wider. His grandmother's eyes were ice cold. 'Or I can give you a long tail ...'

'Grandma!' George cried. 'Stop!'

But she did not stop. 'I know secrets about dark places where dark things live ...'

George ran for the door.

'You can't get away,' she shouted after him.

George ran into the kitchen and shut the door quickly behind him.



George *hated* his grandmother.

‘I’m not afraid of her,’ he thought angrily.

But he was.

‘What can I do to frighten *her*?’ he thought. ‘Perhaps I can put a snake down her dress! Or I can put six mice in her room and shut the door!’



But he did not have a snake or any mice. Then he saw the bottle of Grandma’s brown medicine on the kitchen table and, suddenly, he had a marvellous idea!