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A Story from Ireland

Multicultural Story Summary

In this tale, a hag steals a fortune from a widow and her daughters. The three daughters set out to find it, one by one. The first daughter meets the hag and begins to work for her. The hag tells her not to look up the chimney, but when the girl does, she sees the stolen bag. She takes it and runs past the hag’s creatures, but refuses to help them. She gets to the mill, is caught by the hag, and turned into a stone. The second daughter meets the same fate. The third daughter is kinder, though, and after she takes back the bag, she helps the hag’s creatures. They help her in turn when the hag comes after her. The mill dumps the hag into the stream, tells the girl to touch the stones with the hag’s magic stick, and the three sisters are reunited. They return home with the bag of gold and silver.

Suggested Props

two rocks, a loaf of bread, a bag of gold, stick

Setting

There are two poor cottages at the far ends of the stage.
The Old Hag’s Long Leather Bag

Narrator: Long ago, in far off Ireland, there lived a mother and her three daughters. Before the father had died, he had given them a long leather bag brimming with gold and silver and jewels. It wasn’t long before an evil woman came around and heard of the fortune. She decided to steal the bag of riches for herself.

Hag: Ha, ha! I have the bag! I am rich!

Narrator: When the mother went to get some money from the bag, she discovered it was gone.

Mother: Oh, dear! The bag is gone! What will we do?

Girl One: Oh, no! We are poor!

Girl Two: Oh, no! We will have no food to eat!

Girl Three: It’s okay. We will just have to work harder.

Narrator: And so they did, but it was very difficult to support four people on nothing. They decided one of them had to go out into the world and find a way to make money.

Girl One: I will go find my way in the world.

Mother: Okay.

Girl One: Mother, will you give me some bread?

Mother: Yes, I will. Here you are.

Girl One: Thank you. If I am not back soon, you will know I have been lucky.

Mother: Very well.

Mother, Girl Two, and Girl Three: Good bye! Good luck!

Narrator: The girl walked until she was in a new town. She was tired of searching. She came upon an old house by the side of the road. Now, it just so happened that the woman who owned this house was really the hag who’d stolen their family fortune.

Hag: Hello there, girl.

Girl One: Hello.

Hag: What are you doing here?

Girl One: I am going to find my way in the world.

Hag: Would you like to stay here? I need a maid.

Girl One: What would I do?

Hag: You will help me. You will keep house.

Girl One: That is easy.