



LITTLE READ RIDING HOOD

by Neville Judson

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# LITTLE READ RIDING HOOD

A Monologue  
by  
Neville Judson

Running time about 6 minutes

# LITTLE READ RIDING HOOD

## MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN

(IDEALLY IN AN EAST MIDLANDS ACCENT)

I said to Arthur, I said, "There's no need to get on your high horse. She'll get over it." You wouldn't believe the fuss. He's still muttering on about her being sensitive. I told him, "Don't talk so daft!" Sensitive? Her!

She doesn't listen to a word I tell her. She thinks I don't know what she gets up to. She comes over of a Wednesday, or else a Thursday if it's not that, with the shopping her mam buys in for me. As soon as her mam's in from the market Lucy's supposed to get on her way. It's not fifteen minutes through the woods. It's a wonder if the little madam gets here by mid afternoon.

"I'm ever so sorry," she'll say. "Only I was reading and didn't see what the time was."

Reading? Her! She hasn't even read the fairy stories. I told her she ought be called 'Little Read Riding Hood' – her with her face half-hidden in that daft red hood she's got. She didn't have a clue what I was on about: *little read* – not doing much reading. "What do you want that hood on all the time for, anyway?" I said. "Are you nesh or sommat?"

She meets up with a gang of boys from the school. You know the ones. A right rough lot they are. Doesn't say much for spending money on a posh school. I seen 'er with 'em when I was out looking for nettles for nettle tea. She fancies herself as Maid Marian and them the Merry Men, no doubt. Well, we can guess what the Merry Men got up to with Maid Marian. Little hussie. You wouldn't think she was old enough. "Oh, granny," she says, going all coy. "I just like climbing trees." Climbing trees? I'll give her climbing trees! In my day young ladies stayed on the ground. They weren't half way up trees with Robin Hood's band of men looking up their skirts.

When she comes into the house, it's straight over to the window to peek out round the curtains. She doesn't so much as glance at me. I could be a ravenous tiger waiting to pounce on her, I doubt she'd notice. Peeping out at those boys lurking in the bushes is what she's about. They think they're out of sight but there's bits of them showing all over the place – or else they think I'm too slow-witted to notice.

Anyway, as I was saying, Arthur hasn't got the faintest what's going on. He's never at home when she comes round. He's off fishing. I've lost count how many times I've warned him,