



# The Baker's Daughter

Wisdom

A greedy baker in a small English town has been deceiving customers for years with his dishonest way of doing business. One day, his daughter, having learned her father's devious methods, tries to cheat a poor old woman who comes into the bakery. Little does the girl know that it's a...



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A long, long time ago, in a small town in Hertfordshire, there lived a baker who was extremely greedy. Although he sold yummy breads and sweet pastries, he knew every trick in the book when it came to cheating customers out of their money. To him, that was the most important part of the business. Every night he would sit at his kitchen table and count **how much profit** he had made that day, **cackling gleefully**.

The baker had a daughter who helped him in the shop, and she was just as rotten as her father. One day, when she was working alone, an old woman **entered the bakery**.

"Please, my dear," said the woman, "would you be so kind as to give me a bit of bread dough? I haven't eaten for three days and haven't even two farthings to rub together."

The girl was reluctant to give anyone anything for free, but the old woman wouldn't go away. She thought it would be bad for business if there was a beggar in the shop for too long. Finally, the girl agreed and gave the woman a teeny-tiny bit of dough, just to get rid of her. She had no patience for this kind of thing.

The old woman gladly accepted the piece of dough, but then requested the girl's attention again.

"Please, my dear, I hate to be a bother, but would you be so kind as to bake this tiny bit of dough in your oven? You see, I don't have an oven, and I'm so terribly hungry."

"Fine," the girl snapped, "give it to me." She took the tiny bit of dough and put it **in the oven**.

The old woman happily sat down and waited.

After a while, the baker's daughter went to check on the dough, expecting to see the world's smallest loaf of bread ... But how could this be? That tiny piece of dough had turned into a huge **loaf of bread!**

The greedy girl couldn't believe her luck. She swiftly took the loaf out of the oven and hid it in a basket next to her. Then she turned to the old woman.

"I couldn't find your bread in the oven, it must have fallen through the slats and into the flames!"

"Oh, goodness," said the old woman, "could you please try again, my dear? I can wait."

The baker's daughter didn't know what else to do, so she took another little bit of dough, even tinier than the previous one, and put it **in the oven** while the old woman waited. But when the girl looked in the oven, she discovered a loaf that was even larger and lovelier **than the first**.

"Oh, you wouldn't believe this," she said to the old woman. "The dough must have fallen into the flames again. It's completely gone!" And she hid the second loaf in the basket as well.

"Well, my dear, maybe the third time will be lucky! Can we please try once again? I beg you. I'm starving!"

This time, the girl took a piece of dough so tiny that it was almost invisible. She put it **in the hot oven** and, amazingly, it also turned into a gorgeous **loaf of bread**.

However, by now the old woman had stood up, as she wanted to get a good view of the kitchen. When she saw the girl remove the loaf from the oven and hide it in the basket, she spoke up: "I believe that's my bread!"

The baker's daughter protested, but of course the old woman knew all along that the selfish girl had kept all three loaves for herself.

What the girl didn't know, though, was that this was no ordinary old woman. It was a fairy in disguise! She had come there hoping that through this experience the girl would learn to be kind, but instead she only tried to steal back the bread, over and over again.

Feeling angry (and disappointed), the fairy decided to punish the girl for her greediness. She took the magic wand from her cloak pocket and gently tapped the girl **on the shoulder**.

And just like that, the baker's daughter turned **into an owl**. She flapped around the bakery for a moment before promptly flying outside through **the open door**.

No one has seen the girl since. But if you happen to be awake late at night and hear a Hoot! Hoot! Hoot, it's very likely to be the baker's daughter, saying how sorry she is.