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Opening extract from

Oh Kitty!

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I don't want to clean my teeth



Once there was a little girl called Kitty who didn't want to clean her teeth. Each night she would cry and scream and throw her toothbrush to the ground. One night she even wrote her name in toothpaste on the bathroom wall. 'I *won't* clean my teeth,' she said.

Kitty's mum was cross. 'If you don't clean your teeth they will all fall out,' she said.



'I don't care,' said Kitty. 'I want to have a mouth with no teeth in it, just like Grandad's.'

'How will you be able to chew your food?' asked Mum.

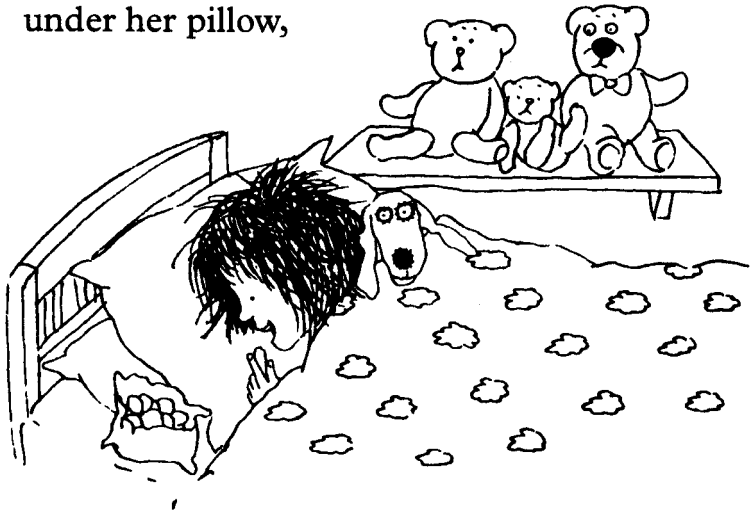
'I will only eat soup and Instant Whip and porridge,' said Kitty, 'because they don't need any chewing!'

That night Kitty went to bed without cleaning her teeth. She put her finger in her mouth and tried to get out a piece of meat that was stuck in her tooth. It always

made Mum angry when she did that. Kitty could still taste the sugar on the apple pie she had for pudding, and the delicious chocolatey taste of the cocoa.

'Yum, yum,' she said. 'I like to taste my tea. When you clean your teeth all the time you can only taste boring old toothpaste. I don't believe all the things the grown-ups tell you about sweets making your teeth fall out – and anyway, I don't CARE!'

And Kitty took a sweet from the packet she had hidden under her pillow,



and chewed it happily. Then she turned over and fell asleep.

Kitty started to dream. She dreamt that she was walking in a huge, dark wood, where the trees grew thickly and no birds sang. Suddenly she heard a loud cry. She ran towards the sound, and there in a clearing she saw Little Red Riding Hood with the wolf. But it wasn't Little Red Riding Hood who was crying, it was the wolf!

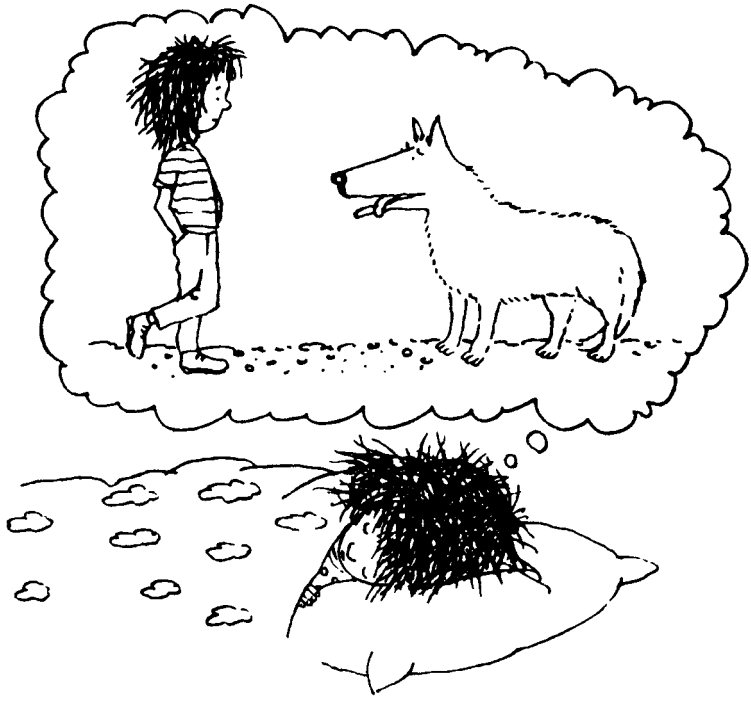
Red Riding Hood kicked the wolf sharply on his knee and laughed. 'I'm not afraid of you any more, because you're just a silly old toothless has-been,' she shouted.

The wolf turned to Kitty and she saw that it was true. He had no teeth.

'Where are your teeth?' Kitty asked.

'They all fell out,' the wolf sighed. 'I didn't ever clean them after I had eaten the children and animals, when I was the Big Bad Wolf. Now I can't be a Big Bad Wolf

I don't want to!



because who ever heard of a Big Bad Wolf without any teeth?' The wolf started to cry. 'The other day,' he sobbed, 'I tried to frighten the Three Little Pigs, but they just laughed and said that when I blew their house down they'd give me some rice

pudding for my gums.'

Red Riding Hood poked him in the eye with her finger. 'Yah, stupid old gummy!'

'Anybody whose job is being horrid has to have teeth,' said the wolf sadly. 'Otherwise people aren't afraid of him.'

Kitty gasped. 'But I want to be horrid,' she said.

'Then you mustn't let your teeth fall out,' said the wolf.

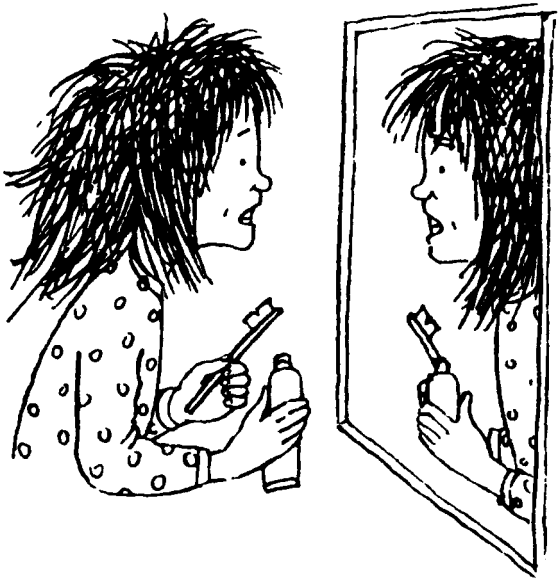
Red Riding Hood led him away, sticking twigs into his back, and laughing all the time.

Kitty woke up from the dream, and rushed into the bathroom. She was cleaning her teeth very carefully when Mum came in.

'There's my good little girl,' smiled Mum, patting Kitty gently upon her head. 'Now you'll have pretty white teeth when you're a big girl, won't you,

darling?'

But Kitty looked into the bathroom mirror, and snarled. It wasn't a pretty girl *she* saw in there. It was the nastiest, fiercest wolf in the world.



I don't want to eat my vegetables



Daniel and Kitty were brother and sister, but they didn't like each other very much. Kitty thought Daniel was Mum's favourite, because he did all the right things and never got into trouble. Dan thought Kitty was silly and a nuisance – and he was always telling her so. But only when Mum wasn't listening.

The worst times were mealtimes. This was because Dan always ate everything on his plate, but Kitty pushed hers away and

asked for ham or biscuits. She wouldn't eat anything else.

'Oh good, it's cabbage – my favourite,' said Dan one day.

'Yuk, cabbage,' said Kitty, who especially never wanted to eat her vegetables. She always called them *veggy-troubles* because they got her into trouble.

'If you don't eat up all your vegetables there'll be no pudding for you,' warned Mum.



'Horrible, horrible!' shouted Kitty, and banged her fork on her plate.

Dad groaned. 'Not all this again,' he said. 'Why are mealtimes always so awful in this house?'

'Because Kitty won't eat her vegetables, of course,' said Daniel, putting the last piece of cabbage into his mouth.

'I don't want to eat my yukky veggy-troubles,' shouted Kitty.

Instead of getting cross, Mum tried to persuade her. 'Cabbage, carrots, green beans and cauliflower are good for you. They make you big and strong,' she said.

'*You'll* never be bi-ig; *you'll* always be litt-le,' sang Dan.

Kitty started to cry. She jumped down from the table and ran outside.

She looked around the garden, and thought. Grass. Nasturtium leaves. All green. She took her toy wheelbarrow, and filled it with handfuls of grass and

nasturtium leaves, and stirred it all round with a stick. Then she proudly pushed the wheelbarrow back into the kitchen. 'Look,' she said, 'I've grown some veggy-troubles of my own. Shall I eat them?'



'Of course not, darling,' said Mum.

But Dad stood up, looked closely at the green stuff to make sure it was safe, and said, 'I don't see why not. Shall I cook it for you, Kitty-Kat?'

He poured boiling water from the kettle

into a pan, then tipped in handfuls of the leaves and grass. He stirred it all round with a wooden spoon, and asked Kitty if she wanted some salt.



Dan started to giggle as Dad took the colander, drained Kitty's vegetables, and asked her to pass her plate.

'Now sit in your chair,' Dad said, putting the plate in front of Kitty – who thought that the green mixture looked awful. 'There you are. You don't like our vegetables, but I'm sure you'll like your own.'

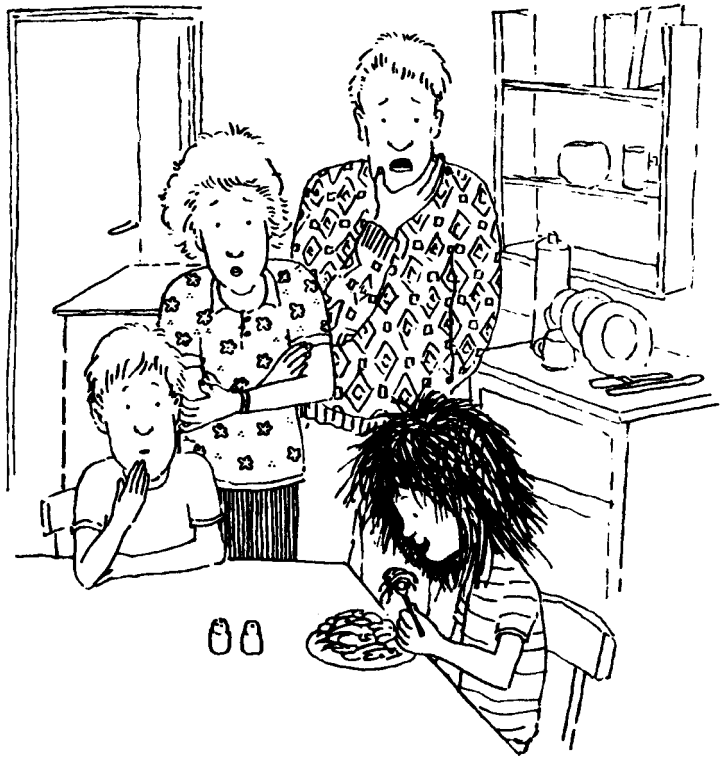
Kitty took her spoon, and looked at

her plate. Then she saw Mum and Dad laughing.

'I'll show them,' she thought, 'I *will*.'

Very slowly, she lifted her spoon to her mouth and chewed. Mum and Dad stopped laughing, but still smiled.

Kitty ate some more, and they stopped smiling. Mouthful after mouthful



disappeared, until the plate was completely empty. At last Kitty put down her spoon.

'That was dee-licious,' she said. Mum, Dad and Daniel just stared. 'I feel stronger and bigger already. But perhaps next time I'll eat your boring old veggy-troubles instead, because mine take *so* long to collect.'

And from then on – she always did.