The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids

Once upon a time there was an old goat who had seven young kids, and she loved them as a mother loves her children. One day she wanted to go into the forest to get fodder, so she called all seven together and said, "Dear children, I want to go out into the forest, be on your guard against the wolf; if he comes in, he will eat you all up, skin and hair. The villain often disguises himself, but by his rough voice and his black feet you will recognize him at once." The kids said, "Dear mother, we will take good care of ourselves, you can go away without worry." Then the old one bleated and set off cheerfully on her way.

It did not take long before someone knocked at the house door and called, "Open up, you dear children, your mother is here and has brought each of you something." But the little goats heard from the rough voice that it was the wolf. "We will not open up," they cried, "you are not our mother, she has a fine and lovely voice, but your voice is rough; you are the wolf." Then the wolf went to a merchant and bought himself a large piece of chalk: he ate it and made his voice fine with it. Then he came back, knocked at the house door and called, "Open up, you dear children, your mother is here and has brought each of you something." But the wolf had put his black paw in the window; the children saw that and cried, "We will not open up, our mother has no black
[27] foot like you: you are the wolf." Then the wolf ran to a baker and said, "I have hurt my foot, spread dough on it for me." And when the baker had spread the paw with dough, he ran to the miller and said, "Sprinkle white flour on my paw." The miller thought, "The wolf wants to deceive someone," and refused, but the wolf said, "If you do not do it, I will eat you." Then the miller was afraid and made his paw white. Yes, that is how people are.

Now the villain went to the house door for the third time, knocked and said, "Open up for me, children, your dear little mother has come home and has brought each of you something from the forest." The little goats cried, "Show us your paw first, so that we know that you are our dear little mother." Then he put his paw in the window, and when they saw that it was white, they believed that everything he said was true, and opened the door. But who came in was the wolf. They were frightened and wanted to hide. One jumped under the table, the second into the bed, the third into the oven, the fourth into the kitchen, the fifth into the cupboard, the sixth under the washbasin, the seventh into the case of the wall clock. But the wolf found them all and made short work of it: one after another he swallowed into his maw; only the youngest in the clock case he did not find. When the wolf had

sated his lust, he trotted off, lay down outside on the green meadow under a tree and began to sleep.

Not long after, the old goat came home again from the forest. Oh, what did she have to see! The house door stood wide open: table, chairs and benches were overturned, the washbasin lay in pieces, blanket and pillows were pulled out of the bed. She looked for her children, but nowhere were they to be found. She called them one after another by name, but no one answered.
[28] Finally, when she came to the youngest, a fine voice called, "Dear mother, I am stuck in the clock case." She took it out, and it told her that the wolf had come and eaten all the others. You can imagine how she wept over her poor children.

Finally she went out in her misery, and the youngest kid ran along with her. When they came to the meadow, the wolf was lying by the tree and snoring so that the branches shook. She looked at him from all sides, and saw that in his filled belly something was moving and wriggling. "Oh God," she thought, "should my poor children, whom he swallowed down for supper, still be alive?" Then the kid had to run home and fetch scissors, needle and thread. Then she cut open the monster's belly, and hardly had she made one cut when a kid already stretched its head out, and as she cut further, all six sprang out one after another, and were all still alive, and had not even been hurt, for the monster had swallowed them whole in its greed. That was a joy! Then they embraced their dear mother, and hopped for joy like a tailor at a wedding. But the old one said, "Now go and look for paving stones, with which we will fill the belly of the godless beast while it is still asleep." Then the seven little goats hurriedly dragged the stones over and stuffed them into his belly as many as they could fit in. Then the old one sewed him up again in all haste, so that he noticed nothing and did not even stir.

When the wolf had finally slept his fill, he got to his feet, and because the stones in his stomach aroused such great thirst in him, he wanted to go to a well and drink. But as he began to walk and move back and forth, so
[29] the stones in his belly knocked against each other and rattled. Then he called out

"What is rumbling and pumping
around in my belly?
I thought it was six little goats,
but they are all paving stones."

And when he came to the well and bent over the water and wanted to drink, the heavy stones pulled him in, and he had to drown miserably. When the seven little

goats saw that, they came running over, called out loudly "The wolf is dead! The wolf is dead!" and danced with their mother for joy around the well.