

## The Gingerbread Man

1875

Once there lived an old man, an old woman, and a little boy. One day, the old woman was baking bread. With the dough that was left over, she made a Gingerbread Man with the little boy's help. The old woman made the shape of the Gingerbread Man. The boy put two black currants as his eyes, and a red cherry as the nose, a crescent-shaped apple slice as the smiley mouth, and three grapes as three buttons on his shirt.

Then the old woman popped the Gingerbread Man into the oven, and went out to the garden. The little boy waited by the oven. He was very hungry.

After a while, the oven door opened suddenly, and the Gingerbread Man leapt out! The boy was amazed. The Gingerbread Man ran towards the door and raced down the garden.

The boy could not believe his eyes, but he soon yelled out, "Help! The Gingerbread Man is getting away!"

The old man, who was repairing his lawn mower, and the old woman, ran after the Gingerbread Man, shouting and screaming. The little boy joined them. So all three began to chase the Gingerbread Man.

However, the Gingerbread Man, still racing, shouted to them,

"Run! Run! As fast as you can! But you cannot catch me. I am the Gingerbread Man!"

Soon, a spotted dog saw the Gingerbread Man and joined in the chase. He barked, "If I catch you, I will gobble you up."

A hungry crow flying overhead saw the Gingerbread Man, and she also wanted to take a bite. "I will get you and munch on you," she screeched.

She joined the little boy, the old man, the old woman, and the dog in chasing the Gingerbread Man.

However, the Gingerbread Man, still racing, shouted to them,

"Run! Run! As fast as you can! But you cannot catch me. I am the Gingerbread Man!"

At the end of the lane, three mowers were busy cutting grass. When they saw the Gingerbread Man, they stopped working, and wanted to eat him. They also ran after the Gingerbread Man.

Thus, the little boy, the old man, the old woman, the spotted dog, the hungry crow, and the three mowers were chasing the Gingerbread Man. However, the Gingerbread Man, still racing, shouted to them,

"Run! Run! As fast as you can! But you cannot catch me. I am the Gingerbread Man!"

After a while, the Gingerbread Man reached a farm. Standing at the gate, were two piglets waiting for the farmer to feed them. They were really hungry. When they saw the Gingerbread Man, they jumped out, and joined in the chase.

Thus, the little boy, the old man, the old woman, the spotted dog, the hungry crow, the three mowers, and the two piglets were chasing the Gingerbread Man.

However, the Gingerbread Man, still racing, shouted to them,

"Run! Run! As fast as you can! But you cannot catch me. I am the Gingerbread Man!"

As the Gingerbread Man raced on, a pony grazing on a meadow saw him. The pony thought the Gingerbread Man would be very tasty. "I will devour you in a couple of bites!" said the pony, and began to trot after the Gingerbread Man.

Thus, the little boy, the old man, the old woman, the spotted dog, the hungry crow, the three mowers, the two piglets and the pony were chasing the Gingerbread Man.

However, the Gingerbread Man, still racing, shouted to them,  
“Run! Run! As fast as you can! But you cannot catch me. I am the Gingerbread Man!”

The Gingerbread Man raced faster than ever, and soon reached a riverbank. The river seemed quite deep. He gazed down at the water, and sighed, “Oh dear! What shall I do? I don’t know how to swim. They will catch me and eat me.”

There was a cunning fox hiding behind the grass on the riverbank. The cunning fox saw the Gingerbread Man, and licked his lips. He said, “My dear Gingerbread Man, are you in trouble?”

The Gingerbread Man replied, “Yes, I need to cross the river fast, but I can’t swim!”

The cunning fox said in a soothing voice, “Don’t worry, I am a very strong swimmer. Just jump onto my back and I will carry you across.”

Thus, the Gingerbread Man climbed onto the cunning fox’s back and the fox began to cross the river. When they reached the middle of the river, the cunning fox said, “My dear Gingerbread Man, please climb onto my nose, because the water is deep here, and you might drown.”

So, the Gingerbread Man climbed onto the fox’s nose. Immediately, the fox tossed him up into the air, opened his mouth and gobbled up the Gingerbread Man.

That was the end of the Gingerbread Man.

Meanwhile, the little boy, the old man, the old woman, the spotted dog, the hungry crow, the three mowers, the two piglets and the pony had reached the riverbank, and seen the fox gobbling the Gingerbread Man up.

The little boy sighed, “Oh! Now I can never eat the Gingerbread man.” He became very sad and disappointed.

The old woman said, “Don’t worry. Let’s go back to the kitchen and make another Gingerbread Man. This time, we will not let him run away and be eaten by a cunning fox.”

So, the little boy, the old man and the old woman went back to their house, and the spotted dog ran back to his kennel.

The hungry crow flew up into the sky and began to look for food.

The three mowers went back to their work.

The two piglets went back to their farm to wait for the farmer to feed them, and finally, the pony went back to grazing on the meadow. Everyone was looking forward to the next Gingerbread Man that the old lady was planning to bake.