

Whuppity Stoorie

as told by Bea Ferguson

Have you ever heard of a place called Kittlerumpit?

Not many have, but some do know a story about a woman who lived there – she was known as the Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit. She had her fair share of trouble in life, as her husband had gone away one day and never come back – nobody kened what had happened to him.

With her husband gone, all the poor wife was left with was her wee laddie bairn and a pig. But as if things couldn't get any worse, one morning when she went to feed the pig she saw that all was not well. It was groaning and moaning, rolling on its back with its four wee trotters up in the air. It looked like it wouldn't last another day, which was especially bad as it was due to have piglets which would have given the wife a bit more money. She sat down on the knocking stone with her wee bairny and she grat, she grat and she grat.

Then she noticed someone coming down the road, a strange looking body with the shape of a woman but the walk of a laddie. As she got closer the Auld Wife noticed her clothes – she was wearing a green velvet dress with a bonny crisp white apron, and on her head a big tall bonnet made of beaver. She was holding a big staff too, which really was odd. To the Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit's surprise, this strange woman walked right up to her and said,

'Now don't you bother telling me what's wrong because I ken all about it. I ken all about your man leaving, and I ken all about how your pig's not well. So what if I told you that I could fix that pig?'

'Could you really fix my pig?' said the Auld Wife, 'Oh if you could, that would just be wonderful, because at the moment I feel like the most unfortunate soul on earth.'

'Very well, I can make your pig better. But what will you give me in return?' said the strange woman.

'I'll give you anything at all!' said the wife.

'Very well,' said the woman, 'Let me see your pig.'

She stepped into the pigsty, looked in her bag, took out a wee bottle which contained a black liquid and shook three drops into the pig's ear. The pig jumped up onto its wee trotters straight away and started gobbling up its breakfast as if nothing was amiss.

'Thank you ever so much!' said the Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit, 'Now what can I give you in return? Food? Drink? Clothes?'

'Oh no thank you,' said the woman, 'I'll take your wee laddie.'

'My laddie?' cried the Auld Wife, 'You cannot take him!'

'But you said I could have anything I liked.'

'But not my wee bairny!'

'A deal is a deal, a promise is a promise,' said the strange woman, 'You promised me anything so I shall take your wee bairn.'

The Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit was devastated. What kind of person takes a bairn away from his mother? How could she save her wee laddie? She started to greet, and felt like she would never stop.

'I'll give you one chance,' said the woman, 'If you can come up with my real name in three days, you can keep your wee laddie. But you'll never guess it!' And off she went with her big staff, due to be back in three days.

The Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit didn't know what to do. She sat down and tried to think, but all she could do was greet. So she grat, and she begged and she prayed, even though she knew it wouldn't change a thing.

When the sun rose on the third day, she got up early and took a walk through the forest with her wee bairn. As she walked further, she started to hear the soft noise of flowing water, and eventually came across a bubbling spring in the middle of an old quarry full of echoes. And then she began to hear another sound, like a woman singing. As she got nearer and nearer she realised that it was the strange woman with the staff, the auld fairy who had visited her, who was sat spinning on a huge spinning wheel. And as she spun, she sang:

*'Little kens our good dame at hame,
That Whuppity Stoorie is my name.
Oh little kens the good dame at hame,
That Whuppity Stoorie is my name.'*

The Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit was delighted – now she knew the strange woman's name! So she quietly made her way back to the house with her wee bairn.

When the next day came, the Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit spotted the auld fairy coming down the road again with her big staff, marching right up to her.

'So three days are over, auld wife, it's time for you to hand that bairn to me.'

'Could I not have a guess at your name first?' said the wife.

'I suppose so, but you'll never guess it!' said the fairy.

'Is it Tiddle Tabouris?' asked the auld wife.

'No it's not!' laughed the fairy, 'You'll never guess it!'

'Is it Kiddy Terankus?'

'Not even close!' said the fairy, 'And that's two tries you've used, only one left!'

'Very well, here's my last guess. Is your name Whuppity Stoorie?' asked the Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit.

With that, the auld fairy turned as white as a sheet and looked so angry she would burst. Off she ran as if she was under attack, and within seconds she was completely gone. And that was the last either the Auld Wife of Kittlerumpit or her wee bairn ever saw of Whuppity Stoorie.

**GIFTING EVERY
CHILD**

**A' TOIRT TÌODHLAC DO
GACH LEANABH**

**A HANDSEL FOR
EVERY BAIRN**



TRACS TRADITIONAL
ARTS + CULTURE
SCOTLAND