

The Little Round House :: An Autumn story with an Easter anticipation ending.

This story floats around the internet and is told by many a Waldorf or Steiner teacher with differing elements and details, however the core message and essence of the story is always the same.

Following is how we heard the story many years ago and how it has evolved into a much loved Easter anticipation story in our home, that our daughter looks forward to each year and our son as he grows, is bound to enjoy with great anticipation as well. I think this story is such a wonderful Easter story, because it incorporates so gently and beautifully the 'hunting', 'seeking' and 'searching' theme of the time.

The story is told with story puppets and hand gestures as the simple verse explaining the treasure is sung. The 'treasure' is an apple and the apple is cut through the middle by the 'Mother' at the end of the story. If you are in a home setting and only have two children, or one child and yourself, then you can eat the apple halves as a snack at the end of story, nibbling away around the star in the centre. When you've finished your snack, it's always very magical for the children to place their 'apple stars' on the windowsill in the evening and find the stars 'taken up into the sky' in the morning, with a sprinkling of 'stardust' (silver or gold glitter) left in the place where they'd placed their apple stars the night before!

Once upon a time there was a little girl called Anna. One morning Anna woke and asked her mother what they were doing today. "Well I thought you'd like to go on a treasure hunt" said Anna's mother. Anna's eyes widened, she loved to go treasure hunting - each year they always had a treasure hunt at her birthday party and it was so•much•fun. "What kind of treasure am I hunting for" asked Anna. Her mother sung;

"It's a little round house that you've seen before,

(make round gesture with hands)

It has a chimney this big, and no more,

(with thumb and pointer finger, indicate the length of an apple stem and then at 'no more' wave hand back and forth in 'no more' gesture)

It has no windows, it has no doors,

(circle pointer finger around the 'outside' shape of an apple and shake head gently)

But there's a staaaar in-siiiiide"

(gently 'shimmer' all fingers of outstretched hands)

"Gosh" said Anna "That sounds like a beautiful house, but Mumma where will I find it?" - "Well sweetheart, that's half the fun isn't it - hunting for the treasure! You'll discover where to go."

Anna set off on her day. A soft breeze was blowing so Anna put on her light cardigan and wrapped a scarf around her neck. She kissed her mother and off she went. Down the garden path she skipped, opening the gate and closing it behind her. She walked along the country laneway where they lived and passed Farmer Thomas *(you can insert here the name of a Farmer you personally know, it's always nice to personalise the story for the children)*. "Good Morning Farmer Thomas" called Anna. "Oh Good Morning Anna" called back Farmer Thomas. "What are you up to today?" asked the Farmer. "Well, mother has sent me off to find a house" replied Anna. "What kind of house?" asked Farmer Thomas, a little puzzled. Anna sung... *(include the hand gestures here)*...

"It's a little round house that I've seen before,

It has a chimney this big, and no more,



ANOTHER DAY

a collection of thoughts, happenings, dreams and inspirations

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But there's a staaaar insiiiiide"

"My, my" said Farmer Thomas, "That sounds like a wonderful house, but I'm afraid I've no idea where you might look for it. Why don't you ask Grandma, she's very wise, and always seems to know everything - she's bound to have an idea." "Thank you" said Anna, and off she skipped, around the back of the orchard and down past the goats and pigs that Farmer Thomas raised. Anna always liked to enjoy some roast pork that Farmer Thomas gave them, with the apple sauce she made in the Autumn time with Mumma.

Anna came around the back of the farm and saw the smoke coming out of Grandma's cottage chimney, "the wood-stove must be on" thought Anna. Grandma was sitting on the porch in her rocking chair, knitting Anna a new pair of woollen socks. Grandma had just finished spinning the wool from the alpacas she kept on her farm, but she didn't dare tell Anna the socks were for her, because the Easter Hare had just last night come by to ask Grandma if she'd knit them and send them to him as part of Anna's Easter basket gifts. "Good Morning Grandma Thomas" said Anna. "Oh Anna, my dear child, how are you today?" asked Grandma warmly. "Well, I'm OK" said Anna, but I'm looking for a house...." Anna trailed off as she looked around. "Well, what kind of house my dear?" asked Grandma in her kind, gentle way. Anna sung... *(include the hand gestures here)*...

"It's a little round house that I've seen before,
It has a chimney this big, and no more,
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"Oh golly" said Grandma, "That does sound like a very fine house indeed. But unfortunately I'm not *entirely* sure where you'd find it." Grandma had an inkling of an idea what house Anna was looking for and she suggested "Why don't you go and ask Brother Wind, for if *anybody* is going to know where to find *that* house, it is going to be Brother Wind". "Thank you Grandma Thomas" said Anna and she smelt the warm air coming from Grandma Thomas' house as she smiled and said ... "Mmmmmm delicious". Grandma Thomas smiled and said "Why don't you come back this afternoon and bring some cream from your cows, I think that apple and blackberry pie should be just about ready by then and we'll enjoy it together with a nice cup of rose-hip tea. "I will" said Anna excitedly as she ran off down the cottage path and around to the bottom of the hill beside Grandma Thomas' house. If there was one place best to talk to Brother Wind from, it was definitely at the top of the hill.

It wasn't a steep hill, but it took Anna a good few minutes to climb it and she really had to try hard to keep on keeping on for the top. When she arrived at the top she smiled as she stopped to rest under the big old fruit tree that her and her mother came to pick in the Autumn. Grandma and Farmer Thomas always said it was more fruit than they could ever need, so Anna and her mother enjoyed to cook the fruit into jams and sauces. Anna stood up straight, cupped her hands around her mouth and called "Brother Wind, Brother Wind" *(it's nice to gesture this as you tell it and cup your hands around your mouth, gently 'calling' to Brother Wind. It's also nice to encourage the children to gently 'call' the wind with you)*. "Whooooooo" *(a soft, gentle 'blowing' noise is what is indicated here)* came Brother Wind's reply. "I'm looking for a little house" said Anna. Now, Brother Wind didn't speak the same language as the little girl, but he could always understand what she was saying. Brother Wind replied "Whooooooo", and Anna knew he was asking what kind of house she was looking for. Anna sung... *(include the hand gestures here)*...

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Well, Brother Wind certainly knew what kind of house Anna was looking for, so he blew "Whooooooo" (*encourage the children to blow with you through these three 'blows'*) and he blew "Whooooooo" (*each 'blow' gets a little stronger, but still with gentleness to it*) and he BLEW "Whooooooo" And down from the tops of those heavily laden branches above Anna fell a beautiful, delicious looking, little, round house! It fell "Plop" on the ground, *right•beside•Anna. (Have an apple in your hands that tumbles down through the air in your hands and arrives beside the child puppet/figure in the story)* Well Anna smiled when she saw it and she picked it up and said...

"It's a little round house that I've seen before,
(*hold the apple out on a flat hand*)

It has a chimney this big, and no more,
(*make sure your apple has a stalk and point to the stalk*)

It has no windows, it has no doors....

(*run your finger around the outside of the apple and make a 'no' gesture with hands*)

But I wonder" said Anna "if there is a star inside?"

Anna ran with the treasure, down the hill, past Grandma Thomas' cottage, past the pigs and goats, back past the orchard, waved to Farmer Thomas on his tractor at the gate and came to the garden gate of her family's home. Through the gate she went, and straight into the kitchen where she found mother. "Mumma, Mumma" said Anna "I think I found the house" she cried, quite out of breath from all her running! "Let me see" said mother kindly.

"Hmmm.... It's a little round house that you've seen before,

It has a chimney this big, and no more,

It has no windows, it has no doors....

(*mother 'looks' all around apple*)

Do you think there's a star inside?" asked her mother.

"I don't know" said Anna. Mother went to the kitchen draw and took out her knife. She carefully cut the apple in half around the middle and then she opened it up. Would you believe it, but there in the middle was two perfect stars shining back at them. Anna's face was wide with excitement "It does, it does!" said Anna. Anna and her mother sat and ate one half of the apple each, being careful to nibble around the star and keep the little baby star safe in it's little apple cradle. "Do you know" said mother, "that if we put these on the window sill tonight, then when the stars shine bright tonight, they *may just* come down and pick up these two new baby stars to shine bright in the night sky above." Anna liked the idea of helping the sky be filled with more beautiful stars, so she put her apple star onto the window sill to await the magic that night.

And in the evening, once the family was tucked up tight in bed, the stars did come to collect those two new baby stars. They picked them up 1 - 2 (*make a gentle little 'throwing up' gesture with your thumb, pointer and middle finger grouped together*). But do you know what else happened? Something came hip-hop! Huh? What was that? (*Quickly hop a little felt Easter Hare across the scene and then away - I always cover the story scene with our 'starry night' silk when I say 'tucked up tight in bed' and then complete the story on top of that silk. I have the Easter Hare drop a few little tiny wooden or felt eggs onto the starry night cloth!*)

NB: *To the best of my knowledge, as said in the introduction, this story is of unknown origin and is a story that verbally travels through Waldorf/Steiner early childhood circles told in various ways. If I have missed citing an author credit, then please do let me know.*