

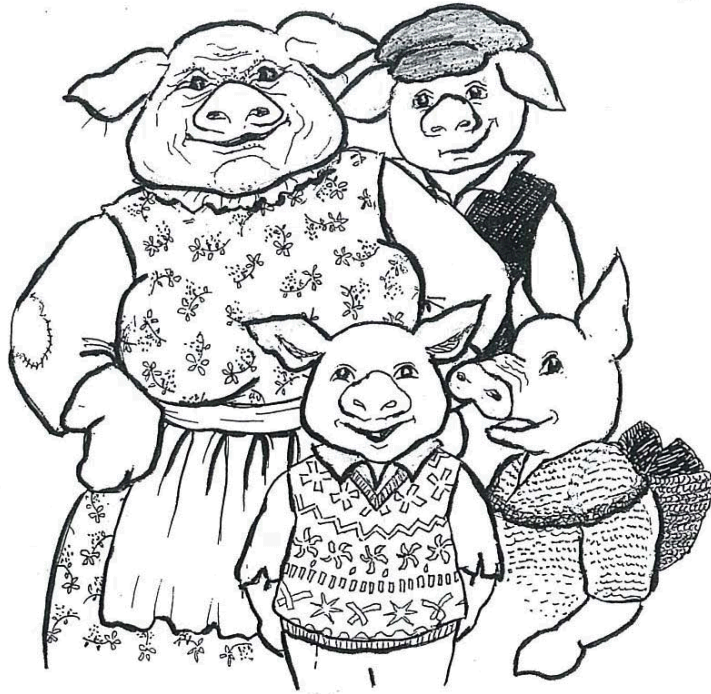
Da Tree Peerie Grice

by Iris Sandison

Illustrations by Eileen Nicolson

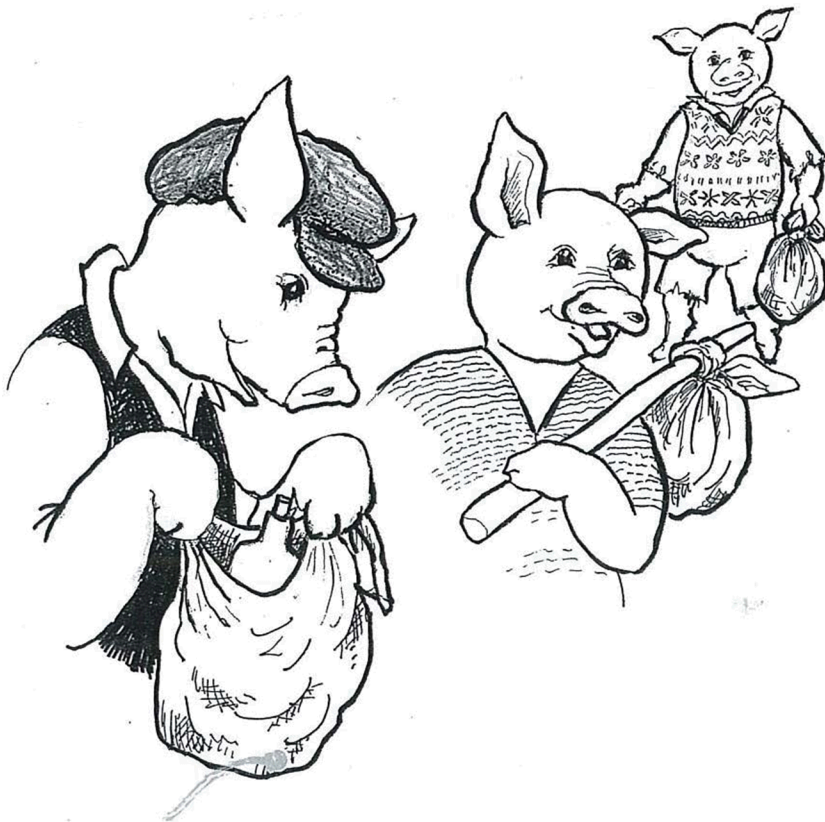


Da Tree
Peerie
Grice



Eence apun a time, a lang time ago noo, dey wir tree peerie grice at bed back ower da hill at Lungatou. Dey bed wi dir mam – a graet muckle sturdy soo – bit as time guid by, shö cam ta see at dey wirna enyoch room fur dem aa i da sty, so ee fine moarnin, shö said tae dem,

‘My bairns, you’ll hae ta geng an mak your ain gaet i dis wirl. A’m med up tree bags o faerdie-maet fur you, so tak you dis an mak awaa oot ower da hill.’



Da tree peerie grice opened up da clooty pockies an hed a skoit inside. Dey wir a bottle o fine sweet mylk, a muckle tick brönnie, klined wi fresh butter, an doon i da neuk wis a piece o a aetmael puddin. Dey lickit dir lips, said 'Cheerio' an set aff doon da daal. But as dey guid by da yard daek, da midder soo tellt dem ta be wary o da Muckle Weekit Wolf at sometimes cam about, fur he wid nae faer laek ta aet dem if he got da chance. Dey promised at dey wid tak care, an wöve as dey trotted doon da daal.



Noo, hit wisna lang afore da first peerie grice fell in wi Lowrie o da Punds, kerryin a maeshie foo o strae upo his back.

'Lowrie, does du tink I could hae some o yon fine strae ta bigg a peerie hoose wi?'

'Ya, dat can du,' said Lowrie an he took da maeshie aff o his back an gied da peerie grice joost whit he could kerry.



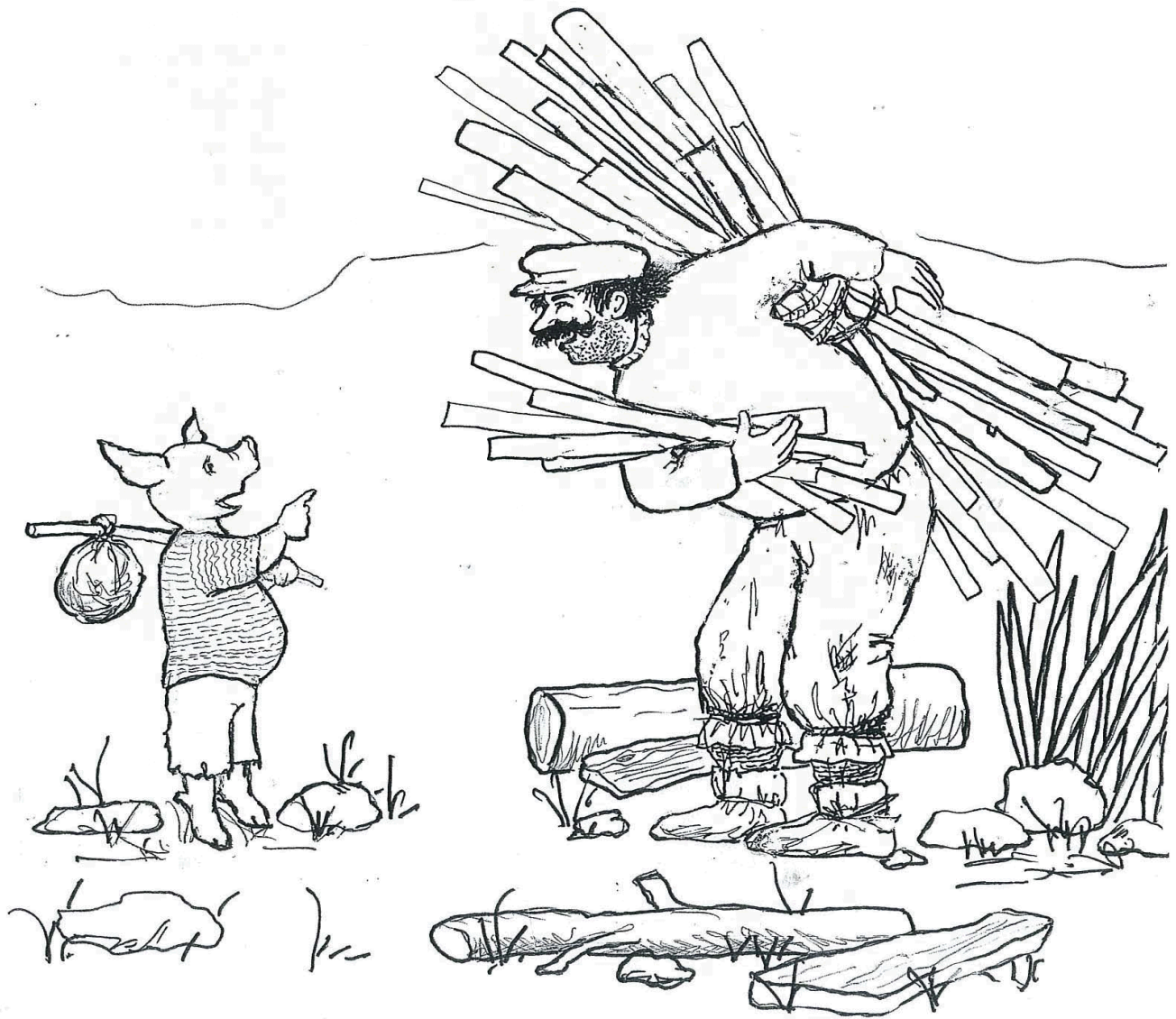
So wi dat, da peerie grice set about biggin his new hoose. He stunkit an peched an took on, an feth, hit wisna lang afore he hed a fine peerie hoose tae himsel. As shön as he wis feenished, he set him at an quilkit doon da fine sweet mylk an showed awaa upo da coarner o da muckle brönnie.



Noo, be dis time, da second peerie grice wis wun awaa doon da daal, an he fell in wi Jeemie o Bakka, makkin hame fae da banks wi a back-burden o widd at wis come wi da sea.

‘Jeemie,’ said da peerie grice, ‘does du tink I could hae some o yon fine widd ta bigg a peerie hoose wi?’

‘Ya, dat du truly can,’ said Jeemie, ‘but du’ll hae ta wael oot o hit ta get da best bits, fur I tink da wirm is been itae hit.’



So atween dem, dey fan enyoch ta dö, an da peerie grice set aboot biggin his hoose. He hammered an knockit an med fast aa da widd, till he hed a boannie peerie hoose, joost da richt size. He wis da prood o him! An whin he wis feenished, he set him inside an quilked doon da fine sweet mylk an showed upo a piece o da aetmael puddin.



Weel, be noo, hit wis comin i da hömin an da third peerie grice wis stendin at up ower da hill, whin he fell in wi Ertie o Gord, biggin up a slap i da hill daek. He hed a muckle roog o stanes at his feet an mair i da borroo.

‘Ertie, does du tink I could hae some o yon fine stanes ta bigg a peerie hoose wi?’

‘Ya, dat can du,’ said Ertie, ‘dir some fine biggin stanes here an far mair as A’ll need.’



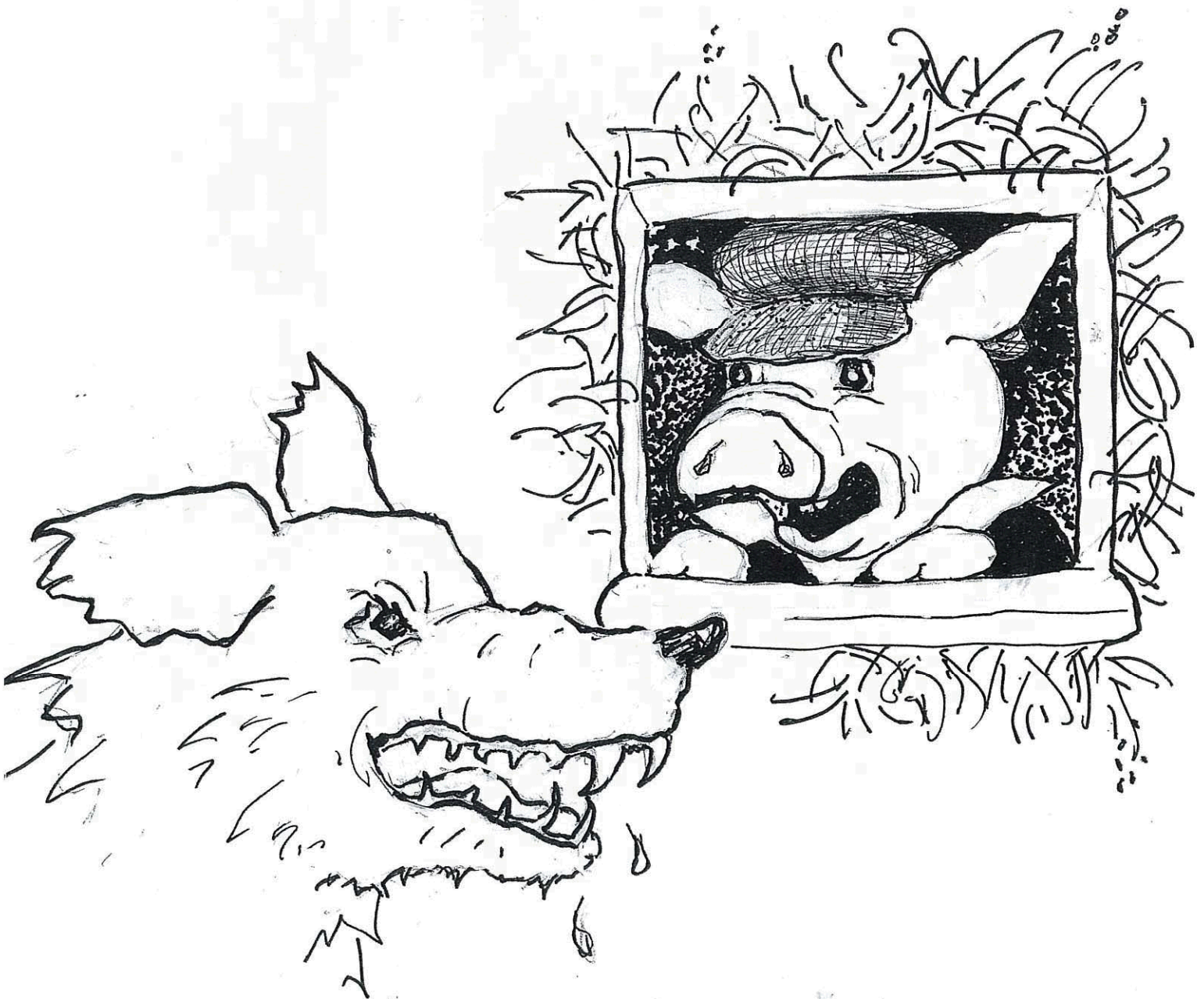


Da third peerie grice waestit nae time, fur hit wis comin i da mirknin noo an he wantit tae be feenished afore dark, in case yon Weekit Wolf cam aboot. So he wrocht an wrocht, athoot linnin him a meenit, till da daylight wis comin i da lift. Da birds wir begun claagin an makkin a wark wi da boannie simmer moarnin, whin he oagit in da door o his new hoose. He wis joost maachtless be dis time, sae he led him ower an fell soond asleep.

So, da tree peerie grice spent da simmer as happy as could be in dir peerie hooses. Hoosumivver, ee drushy day i da hairst, didna da Muckle Weekit Wolf come in ower da hill, an da sleekit lad knockit on da door o da hoose o strae.

'Peerie grice, peerie grice, lat me come in. A'm caald an weet an du could mak me a scaar o tae ta waarm me!'

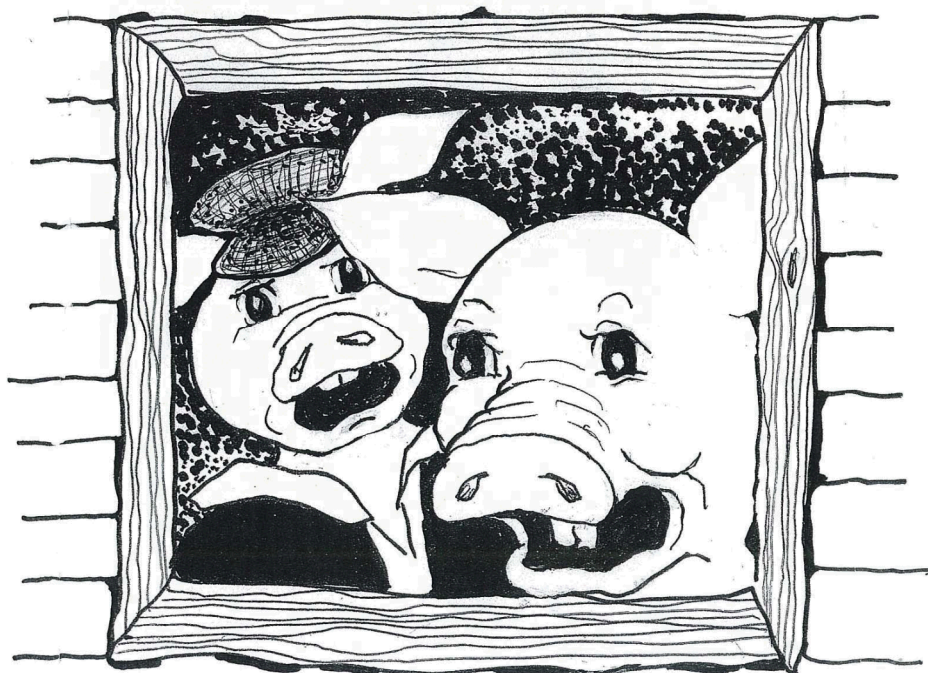
'No !!' said da first peerie grice, 'Geng awaa wi dee an laeve me alane!'



Weel, dat didna plaese da Muckle Wolf, so he started blaain an blaain, till da hoose o strae fell doon aboot da aert an da peerie grice hed ta rin fur his life tae his bridder's hoose – da een med o widd. As he opened da door he yalled, 'Haste dee an bolt da door! Yon Muckle Wolf is makkin dis wye!'

So da twaa o dem sat trimmlin inside da widden hoose. Afore lang, dey heard da pick apo da door. 'Peerie grice, peerie grice, lat me come in. A'm caald an weet an du could mak me a scaar o tae ta waarm me!'

'No I feth!' said da second peerie grice. 'Geng awaa wi dee an laeve me alane!'



Weel, dat didna plaese da muckle Wolf avaa, so he started blaain an blaain, till da hoose o widd fell doon aboot da aert an baith peerie grice hed ta run fur dir lives tae dir bridder's hoose – da ean med o stanes. Dey yalled tae dir bridder, as dey fled in da door, 'Da Muckle Weekit Wolf is makkin dis wye! Snib da door, fur mercy sake!'

Sure enyoch, hit wis ony meenits till dey heard da pick upo da door. 'Peerie grice, peerie grice, lat me come in. A'm caald an weet an du could mak me a scaar o tae ta waarm me!'

'No I feth!' said da third peerie grice. 'Geng awaa wi dee an laeve me alane!'

Da Muckle Weekit Wolf wis da mad! He started blaain an blaain, blaain an blaain, but he could mak notheen o da staney hoose. Fower times he sookit in his breath as much as he could, dan blew wi aa his micht, till his een wis nearly spootin oot o his head!



He could see at he wisna gyaan ta get da better o da peerie grice yon wye, so he took a turn roond da back o da hoose, ta see if dey wir ony idder wye in. Dan, as he skyled up ower da röf, he fell upo a plan. He wid geng doon da lum! So, up he guid, joost laek a speedir.

Da tree peerie grice wir awaar o him an quick as lichtnin, dey reeselled up i da colls, baaled on da best hard blue clods dey hed i da kishie, dan sat back as da lowin taands took up. Da fine blue clods wirna lang takkin up an dey shön hed a guid haet fire. Aal o a sudden, dey wir a rummlin i da lum an doon wi a doose cam da Muckle Weekit Wolf! What a yall he gae, as he laanded i da hert o da lowin fire! He jimpit oot da windoo, wi da swee'd tail still reekin – an da last da tree peerie grice ever saa o him, wis makkin oot ower da shooder o da hill!

Ivver efter dat, da peerie grice lived in paece an contentment an da Muckle Weekit Wolf wis nivver seen again.



KEY WIRDS

aetmael	oatmeal
bed	lived
brönnie	(1) brown tea-loaf <i>or</i> (2) thick oatmeal scone - varies with area
clooty	made of cloth
daal	valley
doose	thud
faerdie-maet	food for a journey
gaet	way, path
hömin	twilight
lift	sky
linn(in) him	rest(ing) himself
maeshie	net for carrying hay or straw
peched	panted
pick	knock
pockies	little bags
*quilkít/ whilkít	gulp(ed)
skyle(d)	peer(ed), look(ed) with eyes shielded
sleekít	sly
soo	sow (mother pig)
stendín (at)	striding purposefully
stunkít	panted
swee'd	singed
taands	glowing pieces of peat
took up(of fire)	began to burn well
wael	select

***quilkít/ whilkít** 'quilkít' is Wastside pronunciation. Most say 'whilkít'.