

The Witch's Story

(written in first person)

Baonjour. Life is hard out on the coast. My husband is long dead so I can't get fresh fish so often, but I can gather a feed of ormers or limpets when the tide is low. I keeps a few chickens, me, and I

grow some vegetables behind this cottage. When times get hard, I

might ask for a little milk or bread from the farms. I goes to the back door for sure, but not everyone is kind. When I gives them a good, long stare they think I'm casting them the evil eye, but it's 'cause I can't see so well these days, see.

When it's cold in the winter my knees and my hands hurt and my back aches for days. We country folk we've never got money for the doctor, so when we's sick we have to look after ourselves. Over the years I've learnt to use plants and herbs that'll heal most things. People along the coast they say I'm wise. They often come to me for help if they're ailing, and I can earn a few deniers mixing up remedies to help them. I give advice to young women with new babies, or them who are expecting.

People are funny though! The women will only come and see me when it's dark. They don't want to be seen here, eh? It's as if they're ashamed to follow the old ways, you know.

I blame the preacher! Him and the Constables are always trying to get us to live by their rules. I don't go to church, me. I stick to the life I know. I still drinks the water from La Fontaine au Baiser up at Les Roussillons. When I was a girl I was told that the water was magic because it was a fairy spring, so whenever I go, I always leave a little bunch of flowers I've picked from the hedge – for the fairies, just in case! There's a big stone cross up there now supposed to scare them away.

I know what people call me behind my back. I hears them whisper when they pass me on the road and there's some who always look away when I say Baonjour. Wicked children sometimes throw stones at my door. Some fools say that I can cast spells, and that preacher reckons that on dark nights I meet with the Devil himself.



The Folklore Gallery at Candie, where you can hear the witch's story

Some people say they seen me flying over the hedges on my way to the Catiaroc for a Sabbat! Well!
My knees are so bad some days that I can't even get over my own doorstep, let alone fly. And my
broom, well, 'tis just a broom!

I'm just a lonely old woman with a cat for company.

But they call me a Witch!

Story by Guernsey Museums, inspired by Marie de Garis' *Folklore of Guernsey*