

Petite Rouge







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A Cajun Twist to an Old Tale

By Sheila Hébert-Collins Illustrated by Alison Davis Lyne



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To Lillian Mouton Hébert, mother of Cordell, Reid, Byron, Joey, and Sheila; grandmother of thirteen; and great-grandmother of four—she leads her “sheep” with love, patience, and compassion and is loved and appreciated by her entire flock—S. H.-C.

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PETITE ROUGE

Once upon a time there was a family named Mouton. They lived on Bayou Tigre near the town of Delcambre in South Louisiana.

Clotilde was the only daughter of Clodis and Odelia. Papa Clodis was a shrimp *trawler* who worked hard in the bayous near Delcambre, while Mama Odelia stayed home mending trawls, cooking, and sewing.


Mouton (moo-tohn)—a Cajun family name meaning “sheep”

Bayou Tigre (by-yoo teeg)—a small stream near Delcambre

Delcambre (del-com)—a small shrimping and fishing community in South Louisiana

Clotilde (Clo-teel)—a good Cajun name for a girl
Clodis (Clo-dees)—a good Cajun name for a man
Odelia (Oh-deel-ya)—a good Cajun name for a woman

trawler (troller)—a person who uses a trawl (net) for shrimping



Having only one daughter, Odelia enjoyed making her petite Clotilde pretty clothes. Clotilde's favorite outfit was one Mother had made for the big *fais do do* the night before *Mardi Gras*. It had a beautiful red cloak with a matching *garde-soleil*.

fais do do (*fay doe doe*)—a street or barn dance that lasts late into the night

Mardi Gras (*mar-dee grah*)—"Fat Tuesday," a day of celebration before the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday

garde-soleil (*guard so-lay*)—sunbonnet



She wore it so often that she became known up and down the bayou as *Petite Rouge*. (Some *Américains* called her Little Red Riding Hood.)

Petite Rouge (puh-teeet roozh)—“Little Red”
Américains (ah-mair-ee-can)—the term Cajuns
used to refer to anyone who spoke English