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bel·dam or **bel·dame** 🗣️ (běl dām, -dām)

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n.

An old woman, especially one who is considered ugly.

[Middle English, grandmother : *bel*, indicating respect (from Old French *bel*, fine, from Latin *bellus*; see **deu-**² [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#)) + *dame*, lady; see [DAME](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

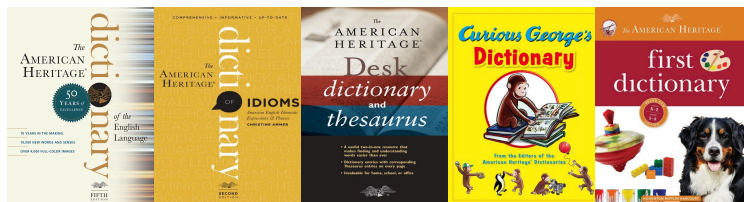
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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