

Little Bear
and
Big Bear

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Any errors still to be found here are, of course, my own.

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Little Bear goes to stay with Grandad

One sunny afternoon at the end of June, a little bear was sitting at home at the kitchen table, eating honey cakes and drinking milk. She was very excited, because she was going to spend the summer holidays with her grandad, who lived in a house in the country.

The family spent every summer there, but this year was different. This year she was going on her own! And there was a summer school to look forward to!

When she had finished her honey cakes, her mother said,

“Come on, Little Bear, it’s time to go. Don’t forget your suitcase!”

They set off to walk to the station. It wasn’t far to Grandad’s house and because Little Bear was feeling very grown-up, she had insisted on going there all by herself.

“Well, if you’re sure, Little Bear, all right,” her mother had said. “But I’ll come with you to the station to make sure you get on the right train.”

Little Bear carried her suitcase on her head, which was how she always carried everything. She was a happy little bear, but she was often forgetful, so on the way her mother repeated the instructions once again, just to make sure.

“Now, Little Bear, listen carefully. When you’re on the train don’t forget that you have to get off at the fifth stop. Is that clear?” she asked.

“Yes, Mum, I will.”

“Then you go out of the station and turn left. Show me your left paw.”
Little Bear raised her left paw.

“Good,” said her mother, “That’s right!”

“Right?” said Little Bear, “But you said ‘left!’”

“Oh, no no no,” said her mother, “Let’s start again.”



“You get off at the fifth stop, go out of the station, then turn left – this way, (she held up her left paw and Little Bear did the same) and walk along the road past a field of carrots. Then you turn right (Little Bear waved her right paw) at the oak tree and walk down the lane till you see Grandad’s house. Do you remember, it’s a small house with a big garden, and lots of apple trees, ...”

“Apples! Yes! I love apples!” interrupted Little Bear excitedly,

“... and a bright green roof,” continued her mother. “Grandad always sits in his chair in the garden, reading the newspaper. He’ll be there this afternoon when you get there.”

Little Bear had been very insistent about going on her own from the station to Grandad’s house – she wanted to show him what a grown-up Little Bear she was!

And so, Little Bear caught the train. She had never travelled on a train before all by herself. At first, she wanted to sit on the roof, but her mother told her that that wasn’t allowed. But then her mother said,

“You might be allowed to sit next to the driver, if you behave yourself.”

And she was! And not only was she allowed to sit next to the driver, but she was also allowed to toot the horn whenever the driver told her to!

So, she tooted the horn whenever the driver told her to. But also whenever she saw one of her friends! The journey was such fun that she almost forgot to get off in time! But a large family of ducks was also getting off, which took quite some time, so fortunately, she had enough time. She went out of the station and stood there, trying to remember what to do next.

Opposite her, on the other side of the road, there was a small shop selling vegetables. Little Bear saw some carrots and thought, “Ah! Carrots! Mum said something about that. I’ll go and ask the shop bearsistant if he knows which way I should go.”

She went into the shop and looked at the row of vegetables on the counter. Little Bear counted six different types of vegetables: leeks, potatoes, onions, peas, beans and, at the end of the counter, some carrots!

Little Bear smiled and said,

“Hello, I’m Little Bear. I wanted to ask about some carrots.”

“Hello, Little Bear! Yes, we do have some carrots, but only one or two left.”

“Left!” thought Little Bear to herself. “That’s where I’ve got to go.”

“Thank you!” she cried happily to the shop assistant. She ran out of the shop and turned left, forgetting that she had just crossed the road, and started running in the wrong direction!

She ran and walked, then walked and ran, but there was no sign of an oak tree, or a lane, or a house with a bright green roof, a garden, or her grandad! She got tired, and then very tired, so she decided to have a rest. She sat down by the road, under a tree.

Just then an old rabbit came by. He stopped, looked at her, and said, “Hello, Little Bear! You look tired and not very happy. Can I help you?”

Now, Little Bear sometimes got a bit confused. And when she got tired, she sometimes got **very** confused! She rubbed her eyes.

“Er, yes, I’m looking for an er ... oak tree house, with er ... a roof garden and my ... bright green grandad!” she said.

The rabbit smiled.

“Well, I know what you mean! It’s just around the next corner!”

“Thank you,” she said to the rabbit, who replied,

“Don’t mention it!” and carried on his way.

And two minutes later, Little Bear was standing at the gate of a house with apple trees and a bright green roof, and there in the chair, reading a newspaper, was her grandad!

Grandad looked up, saw Little Bear, smiled, put his newspaper down and crossed the lawn to the garden gate.

Now she had arrived, Little Bear felt much better. “Hello, Grandad!” she called across the garden, cheerfully. “I’ve come all on my own!” she said proudly. “I got a bit lost on the way, but a rabbit helped me and now I’m here! And I’m very tired. And very hungry,” she added in a less cheerful voice.

Grandad smiled, and said,

“Would you like some honey cakes? You’ve come a long way all on your own for such a small bear!”

Little Bear looked up at her grandad and said in a very polite, but firm voice, “I’m **not** small! I’m little! ‘Little Bear’! But you don’t really look old or wrinkly enough to be a grandad, in fact I bet you’re not even 100 years old! Can I call you ‘Big Bear’ instead, like everybody else does?”

Grandad thought about it, smiled and said,

“Well, I never called my grandad by his real name either. In bear language his name was

‘GGRAAUJJZZTTWWFGGRGDGBBBD!’

But ‘Big Bear’ is definitely easier! Yes, you can call me that.”

He smiled and said, “Now about the honey cakes ...”

“Yes! I love them!”

And a short while later Big Bear returned with a plate with five large honey cakes on it. Little Bear thought they were wonderful and didn’t stop eating till the plate was empty.

“Big Bear, aren’t you having any?” Then she looked at the empty plate. “There aren’t any left. I’m sorry, but I only had five!”

“I’ll go and get some more,” Big Bear said, and disappeared into the kitchen again.

But when he came out a few minutes later, with another plate of fresh honey cakes, all he saw was Little Bear, curled up in her garden chair, snoring.

So, he picked her up, took her inside, put her into her new bed, and covered her with a blanket. Little Bear was so fast asleep that she never noticed a thing. In fact, she didn’t wake up till lunchtime the next day!





Little Bear goes swimming

Little Bear soon settled down in Big Bear's house. She loved it there! There were lots of apples and honey cakes, Big Bear wasn't too fussy about being tidy, and there were rabbits and cats to play with!

One bright, sunny morning about a week later Big Bear was lying in bed, when he heard Little Bear running round from room to room very quickly. He got up, went into the kitchen and found Little Bear looking inside the fridge.

"What are you looking for?" he asked.

"My swimming costume," replied Little Bear. "It's Monday morning, I've got to go to school, and I need my swimming costume for our first swimming lesson today. But I can't remember where I put it!"

Big Bear laughed and said, "Well, I don't think it will be in there! Let's have a look in your room."

And off they went to Little Bear's room.

The first thing Big Bear saw when they went in were several piles of crumpled up clothes in different corners of the room.

"Hm, I'm not surprised you can't find it!" he said.

Little Bear wasn't very tidy. And she didn't like hanging up clothes. She tried the best she could, but she was also a little forgetful. And sometimes a lot forgetful.

"I don't know why I can't find it," Little Bear said. "It should be easy! Let me explain," she added and pointed at a pile of clothes down by her feet next to the door. "Look! This pile here is what I call my 'Today pile', and I put all my clothes from today on here."



She pointed at another pile in the corner. “That pile there is my ‘Yesterday pile’. At the end of the day, I move the clothes from the ‘Today pile’ to the ‘Yesterday pile’. Well, sometimes not all of them,” she said. And after a pause she added, “And sometimes I forget.”

“And what’s that over there?” asked **Big Bear**, pointing to a much larger, slightly smelly pile in another corner.

Little Bear answered straight away. “That’s my ‘Something Else pile’. That’s where I put things when I’m not sure if yesterday is still today, or last Monday was still today when I put them there, or if ...” she paused and then said in a quiet voice, “It’s a bit confusing sometimes.”

She stood and stared at all three piles for a few seconds. Little Bear looked up and saw the sun shining brightly through the window. She looked at **Big Bear** and said brightly,

“**Big Bear!** I’ve got an idea!”

“Yes?” asked **Big Bear**.

“Why don’t we go outside and play with the rabbits? It’s a lovely morning and ...”

“Little Bear, you have to go to summer school. And first you have to find your swimming costume!”

“Oh yes,” she replied, disappointedly. But after a few seconds she caught sight of something. “There it is!” she shouted happily. Little Bear could never be unhappy for long.

She dived enthusiastically into the ‘Something Else pile’ and pulled out her swimming costume, which was still slightly damp.

“Poooooh” she cried, holding her nose. “This smells **unbearable!** It’s awful, I can’t wear it! I know, I’ll put it in the washing machine, then when I come home, I’ll have a nice, clean swimming costume!”

“But you need it now,” said Big Bear. “And the school bus will be here in five minutes.”

“Oh!” She stood and thought. Then after a few seconds she shouted, “I know what to do!” She ran back into the kitchen, held the swimming costume under the cold tap, then stuffed it into her school bag. And before Big Bear could say anything, she shouted “Bye!” and ran out of the house. Big Bear sighed, then smiled and went back to his breakfast. He sat down, then remembered he hadn’t fetched the morning paper yet.



He went outside to the post box and almost tripped over Little Bear’s school bag. As soon as she had left the house, she had seen her friend Reginald Rabbit in the garden, and, dropping her bag right outside the front door, had started chasing him across the lawn.

Big Bear smiled. “Little Bear! School!” he shouted.

Little Bear stopped chasing the rabbit, grabbed her school bag and ran up the garden path, just as the school bus stopped. In she jumped and waved goodbye to Big Bear as the bus drove off. Big Bear waved back, then took the newspaper and went back to his breakfast.

Later that afternoon, Little Bear came home, unlocked the door with her keys (Big Bear liked to keep the door locked during the day, to stop the hedgehogs coming in and stealing the milk), then hid the keys under the doormat.

Big Bear, who had been upstairs, heard her shut the door and came into the kitchen and said,

“Hello, Little Bear, how was the swimming lesson?”

“I got into trouble right at the start of the lesson,” she replied in a small voice and looking a bit embarrassed. Then her face brightened up as she remembered how excited she had been. “I was so looking forward to it, I just jumped straight into the pool!” Then she looked thoughtful again and continued.

“Most of the water in the pool splashed right out. And some of the smaller animals. The teacher got very cross and didn’t let me swim any more. I had to sit on the side. But later, when she wasn’t looking, one of the hedgehogs got into trouble in the deep water, so I jumped in a bit more carefully and saved him. And you know what?” she asked, smiling again now.

“The teacher was so grateful she said from now on I could be the class lifebear whenever we go swimming!”