The Berenstain Bears

Picture and text by Stan and Jan Berenstain

1. 1974 New Baby

Down a sunny dirt road, over a log bridge, up a grassy hill, deep in Bear Country, lived a family of bears—Papa Bear, Mama Bear and Small Bear. They lived in a large tree which Papa Bear had hollowed out and made into a house. It was a very fine house. This is what it looked like inside. It was fun growing up in Bear Country...helping Papa get honey from the old bee tree...helping Mama bring the vegetables in from the garden. There were all sorts of interesting things for a small bear to do and see in Bear-Country. Small Bear felt good growing up in a tree...in his own room...in the snug little bed that Papa Bear had made for him when he was a baby. But one morning, it did not feel so good. Small Bear woke up with pains in his knees and aches in his legs. “Small Bear, you have outgrown your little bed,” said Papa Bear, as he hitched up his overalls and buttoned his shoulder straps. “Today, we shall go out into the woods and make you a bigger one!” With that, he ate his breakfast of piping-hot porridge...washed it down with a gulp of honey from the family pot...took up his ax and was out the door. “But, Papa,” called Small Bear, following after him. “What will happen to my little bed?” “Don’t worry about that, Small Bear,” said Mama Bear as she closed the door after him. She smiled and patted her front, which had lately grown very big and round. “You’ve outgrown that snug little bed just in time!” He tested the ax to see if it was sharp, then headed off into the woods. “What will happen to my little bed?” Small Bear asked again as he caught up with Papa Bear in the woods. Papa had chopped down a tree and was splitting it into boards. “We will have a new baby soon who will need that little bed,” said papa Bear as he whacked off another board. “A new baby?” asked Small Bear. (He hadn’t noticed that Mama Bear had grown very round lately, although he had noticed it was harder and harder to sit on her lap.) “And it’s coming soon?” “Yes, very soon!” said Papa Bear. With a final whack he split off the last board, which gave him enough wood to make a bigger bed for Small Bear. They made the bed a good size and took the rest of the day to chip and shave it smooth and neat. Then they carried it back to the tree and up to Small Bear’s room. When they got there, Small Bear noticed right away that his old bed wasn’t there any more. “My little bed!” said Small Bear. “It’s already gone!” “You outgrew it just in time,” called Mama Bear from the next room. “Come and see.” It was true! There was his snug little bed with a new little baby in it. Small Bear had outgrown his snug little bed just in time for his new baby sister. And now he was a big brother! She was very little but very lively. As Small Bear learned over for a closer look, she popped him on the nose with a tiny fist. “Hmm,” said Small Bear. “She has a pretty good punch for a little baby.” That night he stretched out proudly in his bigger bed. “Aah!” he said. “Being a big brother is going to be fun.” The next morning he woke up feeling fine, with no pains in his knees or aches in his legs. His nose was a little tender, though.

MY HOUSE, MY HOUSE, MY HOUSE, MY HOUSE

2. 1978 Go to School

It has been wonderful summer for the Bear family. They had gone swimming and boating at the lake. They had picnicked in the woods and taken many walks along sunny paths. But now summer was just about over. There was a nip in the air. The birds were beginning to fly south, and the leaves on the tree house were changing colors. One evening at supper, Brother Bear said, “I’m getting tired of summer vacation. I think I’m ready to go back to school!” “That is good news,” said Papa Bear. “Because school will be starting again very soon!” Sister Bear’s ears perked up at the word school. Mama Bear noticed. “As a matter of fact,” she said, “Sister and I are going to meet her new teacher tomorrow.” This year Sister would be starting kindergarten. And she wasn’t quite sure how she felt about it. She liked being at home with her mother and father... her books and toys... and all her friends. What will school be lime, Mama?” she asked at bedtime. “You’ll find out tomorrow,” said Mama as she tucked Sister in and kissed her good-night. The next day, Mama and Sister packed a lunch and took the long walk down the winding dirt road to the Bear Country School. Handybear Gus was up on a ladder, fixing the roof. “Hello!” said Mama. “This is Sister Bear. She starts kindergarten next week.” “We’ll be glad to have her,” said Gus. “Miss Honeybear is the kindergarten teacher. You’ll find her inside.” “Hello there!” said Miss Honeybear in a loud, jolly voice. “Come right in and look around!” Sister thought Miss Honeybear’s voice was a little scary. But she let Miss Honeybear take her hand and lead her into the kindergarten room. What a big friendly room! It had yellow curtains and tables and chairs that looked just right for someone Sister’s size. “What do you do in kindergarten?” Sister asked as they sat down for lunch. “We read stories, sing songs, learn our ABCs, paint pictures, play games, make thing out of clay, build with blocks—we do lots of things!” said Miss Honeybear. Those were all things Sister liked to do. And she had never seen such big jars of paint... or such fine blocks. There was even a whole barrel of clay... School might be fun, after all, thought Sister by the time she and Mama started home. But when the big morning came, Sister began to worry again. “Mama!” she said. “What if I don’t like school? What if I just don’t like it?” Just then the big yellow school bus pulled up to the tree house. “Stop worrying!” said Brother Bear.” “School is fun. You will like it. Now let’s get going or we’ll miss the bus!” He grabbed her hand and away they went. Every so often the bus stopped and more bears climbed on. Most of them were excited like Brother. But some of the smaller ones were quiet like Sister. As more and more old friends climbed on, they got noisier and noisier... and the smaller ones got quieter. The little bear who sat next to Sister began to look worried, so she smiled at him and held his hand. At last the bus arrived. The Bear Country School looked very nice. Handybear Gus had fixed the roof, and the painted the trim, and cut the grass. And Miss Honeybear’s kindergarten room looked beautiful. Everything was ready. Before very long, the kindergartners got noisy! Two of them wanted to play with the same dump truck. Two others wanted to look at the same book. And a whole gang of them wanted to be first to play with the blocks. What a commotion! Suddenly a loud, jolly voice called out: “STORY TIME!” Miss Honeybear was calling the class to the book corner. That quieted things down. After the story, Sister tried everything. She painted a picture... helped build a block city... made a giant clay doughnut... and looked at the books. She ate all of her bread and honey at snack time... and she fell asleep at nap time. When she climbed off the bus with Brother at the end of the day, Sister was the excited one. “Mama! Papa! Look what I did in school today!” she said, holding up her painting. A few days later, the weather turned warm again, as it sometimes does in early fall. Brother was restless at breakfast. “I wish it was still summer vacation,” he said, “so I wouldn’t have to go to school today.” “Oh, come on, Brother Bear!” said Sister. “School is fun. Let’s get going or we’ll miss the bus!” On the bus, all the bears were talking about the things they were going to do at school—soccer practice, science projects, music lessons—all kinds of things! H m-m, thought Brother. Sister Bear was right. School is fun! And off they went in the big yellow bus to the Bear Country School.

Bear Country School Start, The Bear Country SCHOOL, RED, YELLOW, BLUE, GREEN, ORANGE, PURPLE, CLAY, COUNTRY SCHOOL, The Bear Country SCHOOL, Apple, Bee, Cat, Book Corner, SCHOOL BUS, BEAR COUNTRY SCHOOL, MY HOUSE, SCHOOL BUS, BEAR COUNTRY SCHOOL

3. 1981 Sitter

“What’s this?” said Papa Bear, as he took the day’s mail from the Bear Family’s mailbox. It was a notice telling about an important meeting that night at the Bear Country Town Hall. Mama Bear called up Grizzly Gran. Brother and Sister Bear sometimes stayed with Gramps and Gran when Mama and Papa Bear had to be away. But Gramps and Gran were planning to go to the meeting too. So Brother and Sister couldn’t stay with them. Or with Aunt Maude... or Cousin Wilbur. They were going to the meeting, too. “Why can’t we go with you?” asked Sister, beginning to get a little upset. “Yeah!” added Brother Bear. “Because,” said Papa, “this meeting is for grown-ups. And besides, it won’t be over until late—way past your bedtime.” “Well, where are we going to stay?” the cubs wanted to know. “You’re going to stay right here, said Mama, as she put down the phone. “Alone?” asked Sister. “Of course not,” said Mama. “I’ve arranged for a sitter.” “A sitter?!” said Brother. “Who is it going to be?” Sister asked. “Mrs. Grizzle, who lives in the hollow stump at the end of the road,” said Mama, feeling much better about the whole thing. “Mrs. Grizzle!” said the cubs, not feeling better at all... Once, when Sister was playing with her friend, their ball went into Mrs. Grizzle’s flower garden. Mrs. Grizzle wasn’t too happy about it. And another time, when Brother was flying his kite, it swooped and bumped Mrs. Grizzle on the hat. She wasn’t too tickled about that, either. Later that evening, after the supper things has been cleaned up, Mama and Papa got ready to go to the town meeting. “But who’s going to scrub our backs, read us a story, and tuck us in?” asked Sister, still a little nervous about the idea of a sitter. “I understand that Mrs. Grizzle has raised seven cubs of her own,” said Mama, putting on her hat. “And I’m sure she’s a perfectly good back scrubber, story reader, and tucker-inner.” “She’s not going to scrub my back!” Brother Bear said under his breath. Mrs. Grizzle came walking up the path to the Bear’s tree house right on time. There was no question about it. It was the same Mrs. Grizzle who got bopped with the kite and didn’t like cubs tromping her flowers. She was very large—almost as big as Papa—and she carried a drawstring bag. “Evening’, all!” said Mrs. Grizzle in a loud, jolly voice. “Well, time’s a-wastin’ you two!” she said to Mama and Papa. “You better skedaddle off to your meetin’!” Mrs. Grizzle had a strong way of saying things, and folks usually did what she said. Mama and Papa kissed the cubs good night—and skedaddled. “Whew!” said Mrs. Grizzle, as she sat down in Papa’s big chair. “It sure is good to get a load off your feet!” She took off her hat and looked into her drawstring bag. There’s something about somebody looking into a bag that makes cubs very curious. “Mrs. Grizzle?” said Sister. “Yes?” “What’s in the bag?” “Nothin’ much. Just somethings I take along when I go sittin’—a piece of string, a pack of cards...” Meanwhile, over at the Town Hall, the bears were getting ready for their important meeting. They were getting ready for speeches, voting and arguments about some new laws. But Mama’s mind was not on the meeting. Neither was Papa’s. Mama and Papa Bear were thinking about what was going on back home. “Sister looked a little worried when we left,” fretted Mama. “So did Brother,” agreed Papa. They decided to call home and see how things were going. “Things are goin’ just fine,” said Mrs. Grizzle. “Brother and Sister can’t come to the phone right now. They’re busy playin’ Cat’s Cradle...” “Have a good meeting!” shouted the cubs. “—But they say to have a good meeting!” After Cat’s Cradle, they played Go Fish with the cards that came out of Mrs. Grizzle’s drawstring bag. Then they played Tiddly-winks with a special set of winks that Mrs. Grizzle had made out of polished stones and a snail-shell cup. After a while, the cubs got the yawns, and Mrs. Grizzle began getting them ready for bed. And she did, indeed, turn out to be a very good back scrubber (Brother changed his mind about not having his back scrubbed)... And she was a find story reader... and a really super tucker-inner. “I hope Mama and Papa had a good meeting,” said Sister with a yawn, “because we had a very good sit.” The cubs had a number of different sitters from time to time, but Mrs. Grizzle was their favorite—and they were always glad to see her.

The Bear Family, IMPORTANT MEETINT TONIGHT, Town Hall, Meeting

4. 1981 Moving Day

The Bear family didn’t always live in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country. Years ago, when Brother Bear was an only cub, they lived in a hillside cave halfway up Great Bear Mountain at the far edge of Bear Country. It was a comfortable cave, cool in summer and cozy in winter. And while it wasn’t perfect—it tended to be dark and it dripped and trickled a bit—it was *home*, and the Bear family was quite happy there. Happy and busy. Mama Bear kept busy managing things and tending the vegetable patch. Papa Bear had plenty to do with his wood cutting and furniture making. And Brother Bear kept busy climbing, collecting rocks, and playing with his friends. But living on the mountainside wasn’t perfect—it wasn’t easy growing vegetables in the thin, rocky soil, and the trees Papa needed were getting fewer and farther between. But the sun was bright, the air was clear and sparkling, and the view was *magnificent*! Yes, the Bear family was happy and content living in their hillside cave halfway up Great Bear Mountain at the far edge of Bear Country... Until one day, Papa Bear said, “My dears, the time has come to move.” “Move!?” cried Brother Bear. “That’s right,” said Papa. “The trees are getting few and far between on the mountainside.” “Yes,” said Mama, “and it’s not easy raising enough vegetables for a growing family in this thin, rocky soil.” “Where are we going to move to?” Brother asked. “To the valley,” said Papa as he began putting lamps and things into a box. “The valley?” said Brother. The valley down there was nice to look at, but he wasn’t so sure he wanted to live there. It was so far away. “What about my toys”? asked Brother. “We’ll take them along, of course. Put them in there,” said Papa, handing him a box. “And what about my books?” “We’ll take them along, too,” said Papa, handing him another box. “And what about my friends?” asked Brother. “We can’t put them in a box and take them along!” “That’s true,” said Mama, lifting Brother onto her lap. “You’ll be leaving your friends behind. Papa and I will, too. That’s what happens when you move. But you can keep in touch with them. You can write, even visit, perhaps. And besides, you can make lots of new friends.” “When are we going to move?” Brother wanted to know. “Tomorrow, bright and early,” Mama told him. “The moving bears will be here first thing in the morning. That night, as Brother bedded down in in his corner of the cave, he wondered what it would be like to leave his old neighborhood and his old friends. He wondered what it would be like to move into a new neighborhood, making new friends. And then he began to wonder if he would ever fall asleep. And just when it began to seem that he never would, he did. The next morning, the moving bears came with their big truck and began moving the Bear family’s things out of the cave. “Everything goes!” said Papa. And everything did. The moving bears were very fast, but very careful. Before long, the cave was empty. Then, after a fond farewell look at their old home, the Bear family said good-bye to their friends and neighbors, got into their car, and headed down the mountain. The big moving truck followed. Down, down the mountainside they went. After a few tight spots and a few wrong turns, they were in the rich green forest of the valley. “Look at that forest!” said Papa. “Now I shall have plenty of wood to cut.” They passed farms with fine fields. “And look at that rich brown soil! What a vegetable garden I’ll have!” said Mama. Brother was on the lookout for friends and playmates. But all he saw were a frog and some butterflies. And they didn’t look very friendly. “Get ready!” said Papa, as they turned onto a sunny dirt road. “Just around this bend is our new home!” “But, it's a tree!” said Brother. “A tree *house*! said Papa. “A fine tree house—with a downstairs, and an upstairs, and an attic...and even a room of your own!” It was, indeed, a fine house—a whole house hollowed out of a great oak. It did need work—the paint was old, there were some broken steps, and some of the bark was loose—but Mama and Papa had great plans for fixing it up. As the movers took the Bears’ things into their new home, the Bears imagined what it would look like when it was all fixed. It was going to be very beautiful. They were so busy imagining, that they didn’t notice they had company. Their new neighbors had come with gifts of welcome. There were rabbits with carrot stew, bird and squirrel families with seeds and nuts, and a number of bear families with honeycombs, wild berries—and lots of cubs to make friends with. The Bear family felt very welcome in their new neighborhood. That night they went to bed very tired, but very happy. And when they got their tree hose all fixed up, it was just about perfect.

TOYS BOOKS TOYS BOOKS TOYS BEAR COUNTRY MOVING FOR SALE SOLD

5. 1982 In The Dark

“Brother Bear,” said Sister impatiently, “are you going to take all day to pick your books?” Sister and Brother Bear at the Bear Country Library. Sister had already chosen her books and was waiting at the check-out desk. “Hold your horses,” said Brother. “I am looking for a good mystery.” Sister Bear usually took out storybooks and books about nature—and sometimes books of poems. Brother liked those, too, but lately he’d become interested in mysteries—especially spooky ones. “Hey, this one looks good,” he said finally. “Okay, let’s check out.” “Hmmm,” said Sister, looking at the cover. It was called *The Case of the Crying Cave*. “It looks scary to me!” “Say! This is really good!” said Brother later that evening when the Bear family had settled down for some reading. “Would you like me to read it to you?” he asked Sister. Sister was looking at a storybook about three kittens who were arguing about which was the prettiest—and it was a little boring. “Or are you scared?” teased Brother. “Of course not,” said Sister. She left her book on the floor and climbed onto the bench to sit beside him. The mystery began quietly. It told about some bear scouts who were on an overnight camp-out. When the scouts discovered a dark, secret cave, Brother’s mystery began to get a little exciting. And when the cave began to cry and wail, it was anything but quiet! “*’Who-o-o-o-o*! cried the deep, dark mysterious cave,’” read Brother with a lot of expression. “’*Who-o-o-o-o*!’” “Stop!” said Sister, putting her fingers in her ears. “That’s enough!” And she went back to her storybook. “Scaredy bear! Scaredy bear!” teased Brother. “And that’s quite enough of that,” added Papa Bear, looking up from his paper. At the cubs’ bedtime Papa and Mama said good night, turned off the light, and left the cubs in the usual sleepy darkness. Outside the tree house the bright, busy sounds of day had given way to the soft, soothing sounds of night—the quiet conversation of frogs and toads, the soft cry of the owl, the sigh of the night wind. And if you listened very hard, you could *almost* hear the softest sound of all—the sound of lightning bugs switching their lights on and off, on and off. But inside the tree house Sister Bear wasn’t even beginning to fall asleep. That night the dark didn’t seem the least bit quiet and sleepy. In fact, it seemed like the spooky darkness of a scary cave. And the friendly old chest of drawers and funny clothes tree that Papa had made didn’t seem so friendly and funny. They seemed more like cave creatures. So when brother decided to tease her a little more by making a wailing noise—a really spooky wailing noise—it gave her quite a scare. “Mama! Papa!” she cried. “Hurry! Come quick!” And come quickly they did. Papa rushed into the dark room and tripped over the clothes tree. Mama rushed in after Papa and tripped over him. In the commotion Sister fell out of bed and landed on both of them. Then Brother, who had started it all with his spooky wall, turned on the light. What a mess! Sister, still scared, was holding on to Papa. Papa was holding on to the toe he had stubbed. And Mama was looking for the night cap she had lost in the confusion. All three of them were pretty annoyed with Brother Bear. It turned out to be a very long night in the Bear’s tree house. Papa and Mama tried to explain that there was nothing to be afraid of in the dark (except maybe running into a clothes tree and stubbing your toe)—but it didn’t do any good. Sister absolutely refused to go to sleep with the light off. And Brother positively insisted that he couldn’t fall asleep with the light on. The next morning the Bear family was very sleepy-eyed. “Boy,” said Brother, yawning. “I sure don’t want to go through another night like that!” “Neither do I,” said Papa. “And I think I have an idea that might help.” He took Sister’s hand. “Come with me,” he said. “Where are we going?” she wanted to know. “Up to the attic.” “The attic? But it’s dark in the attic—even in the daytime.” “I know,” said Papa. “But there’s something I want to show you. Anyway, there’s nothing so special about the dark. It’s just part of nature, like the light. It’s your imagination that makes the dark seem spooky sometimes.” “What’s imagination?” asked Sister. “Imagination is what makes us think that chests of drawers and clothes trees are cave creatures.” “I wish I didn’t have one,” said Sister. “Don’t say that,” said Papa. “A lively imagination is one of the best things a cub can have. It’s imagination that lets us paint pictures, make up poems, invent inventions! The trick is to take charge of your imagination—and not let it take charge of you.” When they got to the attic, Papa began to rummage through boxes, looking for something. Sister tried to follow Papa’s advice and not let her imagination take charge. And it worked—a spooky shape turned out to be the shadow of some old tools. What looked like a giant was really some piled-up furniture. “Here it is!” said Papa. “My old night light! The one I used when I was a cub and had a little trouble falling asleep in the dark!” Sister couldn’t quite believe that her big, powerful papa was ever afraid of the dark. “Oh, sure,” said Papa. “Most of us are at one time or another.” “How about reading the rest of The Case of the Crying Cave?” Sister Bear asked Brother later that day. “Are you sure you want me to?” “Sure! I want to see how it turns out!” she insisted. When it turned out that there was nothing very spooky about the terrible wailing noise (it was caused by wind blowing across an opening in the roof of the case—like the noise you make when you blow across the top of a bottle), Sister was a little disappointed. And that night, when she and Brother were all settle down in the cozy glow of Papa’s old night light, she said so. “I was pretty disappointed by the way The Case of the Crying Cave ended.” “Why?” asked Brother. “Because,” she said, “I was hoping the wailing would be a really spooky, scary monster!” And she leaned down from her bunk over Brother’s and made a spooky, scary monster face at him. “Cut that out!” cried Brother. Then Sister went right to sleep. But Brother lay awake for quite some time listening to the owl hoots and thinking that maybe he’d had enough mysteries for a while.

bear country library out, mysteries, cubs corner

THE CASE OF THE CRYING CAVE WOOOOO BEAR COUNTRY GARDENS THE CASE OF THE CRYING THE CASE OF THE CRYING CAVE WOOOOO “A mysterious cave!” said the bear scouts. “We should explore it!” But before the scouts could go into the cave a wailing sound came from the cave. WHOO-O-O-O It was a strange sound and it frightened the scouts. “Help!” they cried. O-O-O-O-O WHO-O-O-O-O-O-O-O “The mystery is solved!” shouted Bear Scout Ted looking down from the hole in the top of the crying cave. The sounds are made by the wind. “I don’t understand!” said Bear scout Fred. “I’ll show you!” said Bear Scout Ted. “It’s like when you blow across the top of a bottle.” WHO-O-O-O-O-O-O

6. 1982 Get in a Fight

Most morning, in Bear Country, the sun rose to greet the day and the mockingbird sang its copycat songs outside an upstairs window of the bear’s tree house. And inside the tree house Brother Bear and Sister Bear would wake up. Brother and Sister usually got along very well. They took turns nicely with the bathroom. They said “please” and “thank you” at breakfast. They often sat together on the school bus. And after school they worked together happily on their special project—their own backyard tree house. But one gray morning Brother and Sister didn’t get along well at all! maybe it was the weather—or maybe it was because the mockingbird slept late. But whatever it was, Brother and Sister Bear got into a big fight... Sister Bear opened her eyes and stretched. Then she sat up and let her legs dangle over the edge of her bed—right in Brother Bear’s face. She didn’t do it to be rude. It was just one of those things that happens with bunk beds. But that morning Brother was not in a very good mood. “Sister!” he shouted. “Get your dopey feet out of my face!” “My feet aren’t dopey, and they’re not in your face!” she shouted back. “Get your dopey face out of my face!” snarled Brother. “You shut up!” snapped Sister...and before Brother could answer, she skipped into the bathroom ahead of him. She took a very long time...brushing her teeth, washing up, and brushing her fur. “You’d better come out of that bathroom!” shouted Brother, banging on the door. “Brother Bear,” said Papa, coming out of his bedroom, “you know better than to shout at your sister.” “But she’s taking too long in the bathroom,” complained Brother, “and she’s doing it on purpose!” When Brother raised his fist to bang on the door again, it opened and out came Sister, all spruced up, “Good morning, Papa,” she said, as nice as you please “Gr-r-r!” said Brother. Brother and Sister didn’t say “please” and “thank you” that morning at breakfast—because they weren’t speaking to each other. And they didn’t sit together on the school bus. Sister sat in the front and Brother sat way in the back. That afternoon they made a line down the middle of their backyard tree house to show which half was whose. It wasn’t much fun sitting up there in their tree house not speaking. Especially when it began to rain—hard! Later they kept on being mean by taking back the things they usually shared. Sister took back her modeling clay—which Brother had made into dinosaurs—and rolled it into one big lump. Brother took back his trucks and planes and put them on the top shelf where Sister couldn’t reach them. They got so angry that they forgot they weren’t speaking and began shouting at each other even louder than before. Then Papa lost his temper and began shouting at them to stop shouting. The neighbors didn’t know which was worse—the big storm of the racket coming from the bear’s house. Mama had quite enough. She put two fingers to her mouth and whistled—very very loudly. Papa and the cubs were so surprised that they stopped shouting. “I didn’t know you could whistle like that, Mama,” said Sister. “Well, I can. And I can also tell you,” said Mama sternly, “that I’ve had quite enough of this foolish fighting. Why, I doubt you two even remember what you’re fighting about!” The cubs tried to remember, but they couldn’t. Mama took the cubs into her lab. “Everybody gets into an argument once in a while,” she said. “Even folks who love each other very much.” “You and I don’t have arguments,” said Papa. “Oh, yes, we do,” said Mama. “No, we don’t,” argued Papa. “We’re having one right now,” said Mama, “about whether or not we have arguments!” While Papa thought that one over, Mama went on to say that occasional arguments are part of living together. “We get angry, even call each other names and say things we really don’t mean—and after a while it's over.” “Like the storm?” asked Sister. The rain had almost stopped, and the sun was beginning to shine through the clouds. “Yes,” said Mama. “Like the storm.” “Look!” said Papa. The sun shining on the last of the rain had made a rainbow. “A rainbow is something very beautiful that happens after a storm,” said Mama, looking at the cubs. “you mean like making up after a big fight?” “Sort of,” said Mama. So Brother and Sister Bear hugged and made up. And got along just beautifully—until the next time, anyway.

SCHOOL BUS TWEE-E-ET

7. 1982 Go to Camp

It was the last day of school and the beginning of vacation—that wonderful time when little bears could sit around doing absolutely nothing. Brother Bear and Sister Bear shouted good-bye to Teacher Jane and hopped onto the bus for the happy trip home. “Well?” asked Mama Bear after a day or so of vacation. “Are you enjoying sitting around doing nothing?” “It’s great!” said Sister. “Absolutely!” said Brother. “There’s just one trouble with it,” added Sister. “There’s nothing to do!” “Here’s take a look at this,” said Mama as she reached for something that had come in the mail. This is what it looked like: Some of the things looked interesting. But Brother wondered what “fully supervised” meant. And Sister wasn’t so sure about that “overnight sleep-out.” It sounded a little scary. “Where is this camp?” asked Sister. “Not far,” answered Mama. “How will we get there?” Brother wanted to know. “A bus comes for you in the morning and brings you home in the afternoon.” “Sounds a little like school,” said Brother. “We’ll think about it,” said the cubs, and went back to doing nothing—well, not exactly nothing...They picked a few wildflowers. turned over a few rocks...chased a few butterflies,—and thought about it. “Mama, could we try Grizzly Bob’s Day Camp just to see if we like it?” they asked. “Of course,” said Mama. A couple of mornings later, Brother and Sister were in camp shorts and T-shirts, all ready and waiting when the bus came. It didn’t look much like the school bus. And Grizzly Bob didn’t look much like Teacher Jane. And the camp didn’t look anything like school! Grizzly Bob had built his camp beside a lake at the edge of the forest. There were log buildings, a flagpole flying the camp flag, a big bulletin board with the camp rules—there certainly were a lot of rules—some interesting paths, a roped-in place to swim...There was even a big red canoe! Bob had made name tags for the cubs. “You’re campmates now, so you better get to know each other,” he said. Then he took them on a tour of the camp. There was an office with a desk, where he did his paperwork, and first-aid corner full of bandages and things for cubs and cruises. There was a Rec Hall to go into when it rained. “Rec” was short for recreation. There was a picnic place and a barbecue pit where they roasted hot dogs for lunch. Sister burned hers a little, but she traded with another cub who liked burned hot dogs. Bob announced that after lunch they would all climb up Spook Hill to the very top of Skull Rock—the special place where they would have their end-of-camp powwow and sleep-out. It was quite a climb! That evening Mama and Papa Bear were eager to know how the cubs liked camp. “It was okay,” said Brother. “But they sure have a lot of rules!” “It was all right,” agreed Sister. “They sure have plenty of bandages and stingy stuff for cuts!” But what they were both thinking about was skull Rock and that end-of-camp sleep-out. Especially Sister. The second day was different. Brother had a great day. He passed the swimming test and was allowed to ride in the canoe. Sister didn’t have such a good day. She played dodge ball ad some of the cubs threw pretty hard. The third day Sister had fun. She got a star for a birch picture frame she made in arts and crafts. But Brother hurt his knee in the wheelbarrow race. The fourth day both of them had fun. And every day after that! So much fun that they forgot about Skull Rock and the sleep-out... —almost. Papa found the sleeping bags that he and Mama had used on their honeymoon, and when the camp bus came on the morning of the big night, Brother and Sister were ready...sort of. The climb up Spooky Hill wasn’t so hard this time—even with backpacks. The cubs were strong and tough from their summer of camping. Tomorrow would be Field Day—the last day of camp, when their parents would come to watch their games and contests and see awards given out. But, for now, all the cubs could think about was the big sleep-out. It was just beginning to get dark when they reached Skull Rock. Grizzly Bob built a campfire. Then he went into small cave. When he came out, he was dressed in a beautiful Indian costume! Then the cubs sat in a semicircle, and the powwow began. Bob told them old Indian legends of the great animal spirits—the story of the Great Grizzly as Big as a Mountain, the Soaring Eagle Who Filled the Sky, and the Mighty Salmon Whose Colors Made the Rainbow. As Bob told the old stories, the cubs could almost see the wonderful creatures in the firelit smoke as it curled up into the night sky. After the powwow, they had cocoa and honey bread. Then they curled up in their sleeping bags. And soon they were all fast asleep...even Sister. The next day Brother and Sister did very well in the Field Day games and contests. Brother won a trophy for finishing second in the dash, and Sister got medals for the dead-bear’s float and for her bead belt. It was almost the end of summer, school would be starting in a couple of weeks. “Well?” asked Papa. “How did you like camp?” “It was great!” said Brother, hugging his trophy. “It was great!” agreed Sister, wearing her medals proudly. “But you know something? After Grizzly Bob’s Day Camp, school will be like a vacation!”

The Bear Country SCHOOL SCHOOL, TIRED OF SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING? COME TO GRIZZLY BOB”S DAY CAMP SUMMER, FUN FOR CUBS OF ALL AGES, SWIMMING, CANOEING, ARTS & CRAFTS, SPORTS & GAMES, NATURE STUDY, FULLY SUPERVISED, BOB, AND DON’T FORGET OUR EXCITING OVERNIGHT CAMPFIRE OWWOW AND SLEEP-OUT, GRIZZLY BOB’S DAY CAMP, BOB, GRIZZLY BOB’S DAY CAMP, GRIZZLY BOB’S DAY CAMP, ARTS AND CRAFTS, OFFICE, CAMP RULES, BOB, BROTHER, SISTER, FREDDY, HONEY, BILLY, FIRST AID CORNER, REC HALL

8. 1983 The Truth

It was a lazy sort of day in Bear Country. The air was so still that the leaves on the big tree house where the Bear family lived were hardly rustling. Except in the beehive, where the bees were always busy, nothing much seemed to be happening. It was the sort of day that somethings leads to mischief. Inside the tree house Brother and Sister Bear were sitting around not doing anything in particular. Brother was holding his soccer ball—he’d become interested in soccer and had been outside practicing free kicks. Sister was relaxing in an easy chair, thinking about what to do next. Neither Papa nor Mama Bear was around. Papa was in his shop working on some furniture, and Mama was out shopping. “I know what,” said Sister. “Let’s go gather some wild blackberries.” Brother thought about that. “No,” he said, “wild blackberries have too may thorns, and besides, the seeds get stuck in your teeth.” “Well, then,” said Sister, “let’s go out and twist each other up on the swing and see who gets the dizziest.” Brother thought about that. “No,” he said. “That’s silly, and besides, we did that yesterday.” Sister became irritated and impatient with her brother. “My goodness!” she complained. “You don’t want to do anything. All you want to do is sit there and hug that soccer ball. I think you must be in love with that soccer ball!” “I am not!” protested Brother. “But I’ll tell you something—I bet I can dribble this ball past you!” Brother was a pretty good soccer player and a very good dribbler. But so was Sister. The only one who saw what happened next, besides the cubs, was a mockingbird who was perched on a twig outside an open window. Brother faced Sister. The ball was on the floor between them. First Brother moved the ball with his right foot, then with his left, trying to trick Sister out of position. Then, quick as a flash, he gave the ball a sharp kick with his right. It almost worked. But Sister was fast too. She reached out with her knee and blocked the ball, which bounced against a bookshelf, against a chair, against a footstool, and into Mama’s most favorite lamp, which fell to the floor with a crash. The mockingbird let out a screech and got out of there as fast as its wings could carry it. As it flew away it saw Mama Bear returning from the marketplace! Now, the Bear family had some house rules just as any family has. One was “No honey eating in bed.” Another was “No tracking mud on the clean floors.” And another was “No ball playing in the house!” What to do? Brother looked at Sister. Sister looked at Brother. They both looked at the broken lamp. And they both listened in horror as Mama came up the front steps and into the hose. All Brother had time to do before Mama came into the room was roll the ball behind Papa’s chair. “My lamp!” said Mama. “My best lamp! What happened?” she asked, looking into her cubs’ eyes. “Tell me about it.” The cubs looked into Mama’s eyes, then at each other, and then they began to tell one of the biggest whoppers that has ever been told in Bear Country. “It was a bird!” began Brother. “Yes,” added Sister, “a big purple bird with yellow feet!” “And green wing tips,” added Brother. “And funny-looking red feathers sticking out of its head,” said Sister, as a finishing tough. As most lies do, the purple bird whopper got bigger and bigger and bigger. “Yes,” continued the cubs, “and it flew in that window, zoomed around the room, and knocked over the lamp!” As Mama Bear was looking at the broken lamp with a sad expression on her face, Papa Bear came in from his shop. The cubs began to tell him the story of the big bird that flew in the window and broke the lamp. It was harder to tell the second time. For one thing, they couldn’t quite remember how they had told it the first time. “You’ve got me confused,” said Papa. “Was it a purple bird with green wing tips and yellow feet?” “Or a yellow bird with purple wing tips and green feet?” “Or...was it a white bird with black spots...like that soccer ball behind my easy chair?” But the thing that really made it hard the second time was how very sad Mama looked as she picked up the pieces of the broken lamp. “Mama, we’re really sorry about the lamp,” said Brother. “Oh, yes!” said Sister, picking up the last piece and putting it in the dust pan. “Oh,” said Mama, “I’m not worried about the lamp. We can always get another lamp, or we can glue this one back together. What I ‘m sad about is the thought that maybe, just maybe, my cubs, whom I’ve always trusted, aren’t telling me the truth. And trust is not something you can put back together again.” Both cubs started to talk at once. “It wasn’t a bird!” said Sister. “It was a soccer ball.” “And it was all my fault!” shouted Brother. “It was just as much my fault!” shouted Sister. But they were both shouted down by the phone, which rang loudly. It was Grizzly Gran inviting the Bear family for a Sunday visit. “Hello, Gran!” said Mama. “Oh, everything is just fine here in the tree house. How is everything with you?” “But, Mama!” protested Sister after Mama hung up the phone. “You told Gran that everything is fine here, and that isn’t really the truth.” Nobody really expects cubs to be perfect, and from time to time Brother and Sister Bear did forget the rules. Brother ate honey in bed a couple of times. One time Sister tracked a little mud on the clean floor. And once or twice Brother and Sister started to play ball in the hose before they remembered not to. But they ever, ever again told a whopper...before trust is one thing you can’t put back together once it’s broken.

9. 1984 Mama’s New Job

The Bear family, who lived in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country, was a very happy family. One of the reasons was that they were all very busy. Each member of the family had work to do. Papa Bear cut and split logs and made the wood into handsome furniture which he was proud to sell. Mama Bear not only took care of her family, but she managed the whole tree house and tended the vegetable patch as well. And, of course, Brother and Sister Bear had important jobs too: going to school and keeping up with their schoolwork. The members of the Bear family had hobbies, too. Papa’s favorite hobbies were fishing and napping. He caught almost as many naps as he caught fish. Brother and Sister also had many hobbies. Brother was especially proud of his model airplanes. He liked to have Mama watch him fly his models, and sometimes she helped him fly his tether plane. Sister was a super rope-jumper and her goal was to jump a thousand times without a miss. She liked to have Mama count for her because Sister could jump faster than she could count. Since Mama was so busy with her household duties, she had time for just one hobby—but what a hobby! Mama was the best quilt maker in all of Bear Country! Her quilts were light and fluffy, but very warm. Her stitchery was fine and even. And her designs were original and exciting. Sister Bear slept cozy and warm under a quilt that showed her jumping rope. Brother went to sleep under a handsome airplane design. And the big quilt on Mama and Papa’s bed showed the Bear family’s beautiful tree house. Yes, the members of the Bear family had happy, busy, full lives. Especially Mama. “My dear,” called Papa to Mama as she worked in the vegetable patch, “if it wouldn’t be too much trouble, would you put aside any fishing worms you might find?” “Look, Mama!” called Brother. “I’m going to fly my new biplane!” “I’m going to try for a thousand, Mama!” said Sister. “Would you please count for me?” A little too full, thought Mama from time to time. She would have liked to have a little more time for her quilts. She had some lovely design ideas she wanted to try: a sunburst with clouds and bluebirds... a beautiful bouquet of flowers with butterflies... and a harvest scene with pumpkins and squash. But there just never seemed to be enough time. Then one day something happed that changed the lives of the Bear family—something that changed Mama’s quilt-making from a hobby... into a business! It might not have happened except for a coincidence, which is when two things happen at the same time. The two things that happened were that Papa had a big sale of some very special furniture, and on the same day Mama hung out the family quilts to air. Folks who came to buy Papa’s handsome furniture became excited about Mama’s beautiful quilts and wanted to buy them, too. Would-be buyers offered Mama quite a lot of money. They were very disappointed when she told them that the quilts were not for sale. “With your talent, you really should be in business!” they said. “Mama in business?” said Papa, patting her on the shoulder. “I don’t think so. One business-bear in the family is enough.” But Mama wasn’t so sure. She was proud of her quilt-making skills and knowledge. After all, she was president of the Bear Country Quilting Club. Other quilt makers often came to her for help and advice. That evening Papa and the cubs noticed that Mama was very quiet. She was quiet during supper. She was quiet during cleanup. She was quiet all evening. She was quiet because she was thinking—thinking about going into business. The next day at lunch she made her big announcement. “I’ve decided to open up a quilt shop.” she said, “and I’ve rented the empty store just down the road.” “Not that overgrown wreck that’s been empty for years!” protested Papa. “But you don’t want to be a business-bear,” said Sister. “you’re our mama!” “That’s no reason why I shouldn’t open my own quilt shop. A lot of mama bears have jobs: Mrs. Grizzle is a sister; Mrs. Honeybear teaches school; Dr. Gert grizzly is your pediatrician...” “Yeah,” said Brother, “but they’re not our mama!” “There’s really nothing to worry about,” said Mama. “Things aren’t going to be all that different.” “Will you still count for me when I jump rope?” asked Sister. “And will you still watch my fly my airplanes?” Brother wanted to know. “And how about my fishing worms?” asked Papa. “Will you still put them aside for me when you tend the vegetable patch?” “We’ll see about all that,” Mama said. “Meanwhile, I have to be at the shop. Some of my quilt club friends are helping me get it ready—and, oh yes,” she added as she turned to leave, “there’s a lot to do, so supper may be a little late tonight. Ta-ta!” “Ta-ta!” said Papa. “Ta-ta!” said the cubs. Supper wasn’t a little late that night. It was a lot late—and it was Papa and the cubs who prepared it. But they didn’t mind, because although Mama was very tired, she was very happy, too—happy and excited! “Guess what!” said Sister as she served Mama her supper. “I reached a thousand jumps today! Brother counted for me!” “And Sis helped me fly my tether plane! We had a great flight!” added Brother. “And I weeded the vegetable patch,” said Papa, bringing a tub of warm water to Mama for her tired feet. “Well,” said Mama. “I’m very proud of you all.” Papa and the cubs were very proud of her, too. There was no way to tell whether the quilt shop would be a success, but she certainly was giving it a good try. After about two weeks of hard work, the Bear Country Quilt Shop had its grand opening. It was a very exciting event! Not only did Mama sell her own quilts, but she sold quilts for all the members of her club as well. It was a great success. Why, even Mayor and Mrs. Honeypot came in their long lavender limousine. They bought one quilt and ordered three more. “I know what!” said Mama as she closed ups shop that night. “Let’s stop off at the Burger Bear for supper! My treat!” The Bear family celebrated with a delicious Burger Bear supper. Papa and the cubs were very proud of their business-bear wife and mama. The extra money came in handy too!

Country Quilts QUILTS for SALE HOME SWEET TREE FURNITURE SALE FURNITURE SALE GRAND OPENING THE BEAR COUNTRY QUILT SHOP GRAND OPENING THE BEAR COUNTRY QUILT SHOP THE BURGER BEAR

10. 1985 Learn about strangers

Brother and Sister Bear, who lived with their mama and papa in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road dee in Bear Country, looked quite a lot alike. Except for the fact that Brother was a boy cub and Sister was a girl cub, they were alike in many ways. And even though they each had hobbies (Brother loved to build and fly model airplanes; Sister had all sorts of special interests), they enjoyed many of the same things: bike riding, baseball, soccer, Frisbee, and just getting out and enjoying nature. Yes, Brother and Sister were alike in many ways. But in some important ways they were different. Brother Bear was cautious and careful and a little wary of strangers, Sister, on the other hand, wasn’t the least bit wary. She was friendly to a fault. Just about every body that came her way got a big hello. “Hello, butterfly!” “Hello, frog!” “Hello, Mr. Truck Driver!” “Hello, Mrs. Shopper!” Brother worried about Sister’s free and easy way with strangers. Strangers weren’t a problem for him. Not talking to strangers suited cautious and careful Brother just fine. But friendly-to-a-fault Sister was different. She talked to everybody. “Sister,” said Brother. “You’re going to have to stop that!” “Stop what?” she asked. “Talking to strangers! It’s just not a good idea!” “Why?” she wanted to know. “Why shouldn’t I talk to strangers? What harm is there in it? Is there something wrong with strangers?” “Hmm,” said Brother, thinking about it for a moment. “Those aren’t questions for a brother. Those are for a mama or papa...” “Sister Bear, I’m glad you asked those questions!” said Papa Bear, in his deepest and most serious voice. “The reason you should never talk to a stranger and never ever take presents from a stranger and never ever ever go anywhere with a stranger is that it’s dangerous>” “What’s dangerous about it?” she asked, wide-eyed. “What can happen?” “Oh, dear,” thought Mama Bear. “I do hope Papa can tell Sister about strangers without making everything scary.” “All sorts of thinks!” Papa said. “Here! Look at the newspaper!” As she looked at it her eyes got wider and wider. This is what she saw... “I hope you’re paying attention to all this,” called Papa to Brother Bear. “Yes, Papa,” said Brother looking up from his airplanes. When Sister asked for a bedtime story that evening, Papa said, “Of course! I have just the one!” It was in an old book that Papa had kept since he was a cub. The story was called “Silly Goose and Wily Fox.” It told how Silly Goose got into a conversation with Wily Fox, and before Silly knew quite what was happening she found herself in Wily’s lair. This is how the story ended. “’...then there was a snip and a snap and all that was left of Silly Goose was a few floating feathers and a smile on the face of Wily Fox.” Sister had a hard time falling asleep that night. Her mind was filled with those headline. There was even one that SILLY GOOSE MISSING! WILY FOX QUESTIONED! The sound of Brother Bear’s peaceful breathing finally lulled her to sleep. The next day dawned bright and friendly—to everybody but Sister. She had spent a restless night and when she looked out the window, everything seemed a little strange. The trees seemed to reach for her, an owl stared at her, and the crows glared. “Let’s go out and ride our bikes on the village green!” said Brother after breakfast. But Sister didn’t want to. Brother was puzzled. The green was a bright, busy, friendly place where she loved to play. “Well, how about some soccer?” But she didn’t want to do that either. It wasn’t until he suggested Frisbee, her favorite game, that she agreed to go along. Before they left, they told Mama where they’d be—it was a family rule that they never went anywhere without telling Mama or Papa. “That’s fine,” said Mama. “I’m on my way to Farmer Ben’s for apples. I’ll stop by for you on the way home.” The village green was the same bustling place it had always been. This is what it looked like—to everyone but Sister. This is what it looked like to her. Today even the frogs and butterflies seemed mean and scary to Sister. Later, when somebody tapped her on the shoulder, she jumped a mile—even though it was just Mama. “How was everything at the village green?” asked Mama on the way home in the car. Sister sat in front with mama, and Brother rode in back with the barrel of apples. “All right, I guess,” said Sister. “But there were so many strangers!” Later at home, when Mama and Sister were getting ready to make applesauce, Mama said, “You know, what Papa told you was quite right. “it’s not a good idea to talk to strangers or accept presents or rides from them. “But,” she continued, “that doesn’t mean that all strangers are bad. Why, chances are, there wasn’t a single person on that green that would harm a fly, much less a fine little cub like you. The trouble is...well, it’s like this barrel of apples. There’s an old saying that goes, ‘There’ll always be a couple of bad apples in every barrel.’ This the way it is with strangers. Cubs have to be careful because of the few bad apples. “Look! said Sister. “I found one! It’s all bumpy and has a funny shape!” “Well, it certainly is strange looking,” said Mama. “But that doesn’t necessarily mean it’s bad. You can’t always tell from the outside which are the ‘bad apples.’” She cut it in half. “See?” she said. “It’s fine inside.” “Now here’s on that look find on the outside...—but inside, it’s all wormy.” “Yugh!” said Sister. “What’s up?” asked Brother. “A bad apple!” said Sister. “Double yugh!” said Brother. “Hey! I’m going to the meadow to fly my new pusher plane. Want to come?” “Sure,” Sister said. “I can pick some wildflowers!” She felt much better now—more like her old friendly self. The pusher plane was a great success, and the cubs were about to head home when someone drove onto the meadow with a big beautiful orange and green model airplane. “Wait!” said Brother. “I want to watch! It’s a radio-controlled job!” Sister went back to picking wildflowers, but before she knew it, Brother was talking to the stranger! For that’s what he was, a stranger—no matter how big and beautiful his radio-controlled job was! She dropped her wildflowers and ran over to them. “I’m going to send it up and follow in the car,” the stranger was saying. “Want to come along?” “Wow! said Brother. And he would have—if Sister hadn’t grabbed his arm and said, “Don’t you dare!” The stranger drove off following his airplane, and Sister ran home shouting. “Brother talked to a stranger! Brother talked to a stranger!” “But it was a big orange and green radio-controlled job! said Brother. “That doesn’t matter,” said Papa. “We have rules about strangers—and they’re important!” “We have rules about tattletales, too,” said Brother, glaring at Sister. “Sister wasn’t tattling. Tattling is telling just to be mean,” explained Mama. “And Sister was telling because she loves you and was worried.” “Do you think that fellow was a ‘bad apple’?” asked Brother. “Probably not,” said Mama. “That’s right,” said Sister. “Most folks are friendly and nice and wouldn’t hurt a fly. But you have to be careful, just in case.” “Speaking of apples,” said Mama, “how about some of this applesauce I just made?” As they sat having a dish of Mama’s delicious applesauce, Brother and Sister thought about what they had learned that day. There was quite a lot to think about.

HELLO! HI! HELLO! BEAR COUNTRY NEWS STRANGER BOTHERS CUB MISSING CUB FOUND CHIEF GRIZZLY QUESTIONS STRANGER BEAR COUNTRY NEWS CUB SAFETY MEETING STRANGER BOTHERS CUB MISSING CUB FOUND SILLY GOOSE MISSING CHIEF GRIZZLY QUESTIONS STRANGER WILLY FOX QUESTIONED YIPE! BROTHER AND SISTER BEAR’S RULES FOR CUBS 1. Never talk to a stranger. 2. Never take candy or other gifts from a stranger. 3. Never ever go anywhere with a stranger. 4. Don’t keep secrets from your parents—especially if someone asks you to. 5. Your body is your own personal property and nobody else’s business—especially the private parts. (When you’re real little, of course, mama or Papa may help you with your bath or in the bathroom—and your doctor is in the body business and will have to examine you from time to time, even when you’re not little.) 6. Use your common sense. We can’t have rules for everything. Common sense is what keeps us safe by telling us what to do in situations that are not covered by rules.

11. 1985 Forget their Manners

There was trouble in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country—trouble with manners. The Bear family’s trouble with manners was that they forgot them! At first it was just an occasional “please” or “thank you” that was forgotten. Then there was a rude push without an “excuse me.” Then a reach across the table instead of a “please pass the broccoli.” Mama Bear wasn’t quite sure how or why it happened. But she was sure of one thing—whatever the reason, the Bear family had become a pushing, shoving, name-calling, ill-mannered mess! At the table it was even worse. They were a grabbing, mouth-stuffing, food-fighting, kicking-under-the-table super mess! Of course, Mama Bear tried to correct Brother and Sister Bear’s behavior. She tried coaxing. She tried complaining. She tried shouting! She tried going to Papa for help (though it sometimes seemed to Mama that he was part of the problem). Papa banged on the table and shouted as only he could shout. But nothing really seemed to do any good. Mama didn’t like what was happening to her family. Not one bit. Something had to be done. But what? The best way to fight bad habits, she thought, was with good habits. Then she thought of a plan. She got a big piece of cardboard and a marker. At the top she wrote: THE BEAR FAMILY POLITENESS PLAN When the plan was finished, she called a family meeting and showed it to Papa and the cubs. It certainly got the Bear family’s attention! Mama’s plan had a list of all the rude things she wanted to stop. Beside each one was a penalty—a job or chore that went with it. If you forgot a “please” or a “thank you,” you had to sweep the front steps. If you pushed or shoved, you had to beat two rugs. If you got caught name calling, you had to clean the whole cellar! “But, Mama!” sputtered the cubs. “You’re not being fair!” “It seems to me,” she said, “that you’re the ones who aren’t being fair—to yourselves or anyone else. That’s what manners are all about—being fair and considerate. Manners are very important. They help us get along with each other. Why, without manners—” “Your mama’s absolutely right!” interrupted Papa. “Thank you, Papa, for your comment. But interrupting is number three on Rude List, and the penalty is dusting the downstairs.” mama said, and handed him the feather duster. “Hmm,” said Brother. “This looks serious I think we’d better come up with a plan of our own or we’re going to be doing a lot of extra chores.” “What sort of plan?” asked Sister. “Well,” he said, “instead of just being polite, we’ll be super polite. We’ll *please* and *thank* you so much that Mama will get fed up and call the whole thing off!” “Yes,” said Sister. “We’ll be so polite, she won’t be able to stand it!” They put their plan into action. They were super polite... —on the stairs: “After you, Sister dear!” “Thank you, dear Brother!”—in the hall: “Excuse me, Brother dear!” “Why, certainly, my dear Sister!”—waiting for the bathroom: “Terribly sorry to have kept you waiting!” “Think nothing of it, my dear!” But it didn’t work the way they expected. Mama didn’t get fed up at all. And after a while Brother and Sister forgot about being super polite and were just polite...—at the table: “Pass the honey, please.” “Certainly.”—in their room: “Would you like me to help you pick up your toys?” “Thank you very much.”—in the yard: “Oops! Sorry—I didn’t mean to bump you.” “That’s all right. No harm done.” And it turned out that Mama had been right: thinks did go more smoothly. Once they got into the good manners habit, they didn’t even have to think about it. But it wasn’t so easy for Papa. He was the one who got fed up. It’s a little harder to change habits when you’re older, and he had to do quite a few extra chores for forgetting his manners. “I’m glad to get out of the house, away from that Politeness Plan!” he said as he drove the family along the highway on a trip to the supermarket. “Manners and courtesy are just as important away from home—especially on the road,” said Mama as they stopped at a stop sign to let pedestrians and other cars pass. “They help us drive safely.” “Well,” grumbled Papa as they all went into the busy supermarket, “I think you can have too much of a good thing—you’ve got to have common sense along with manners!! Why if you let everyone go ahead of you at the checkout, you’d be there forever! “And sometimes you have to interrupt—Excuse me, madam,” he interrupted a shopper, “but I believe you have a leaking bottle in your cart!” The shopper thanked him for his help. “You see?” he said, driving home. “There’s more to life than remembering your manners. Besides, manners are all right for cubs and mama bears...but we papa bears have other things to think about—“At that moment the car in front stopped suddenly and Papa bumped into it. He was furious. “Why, that pinheaded fiddlebrain!” he snarled. “Name calling!” reminded Sister. The penalty for name calling was cleaning the whole cellar, so Papa gritted his teeth and remembered his manners. And a good thing, too. Because climbing out of the other car was the biggest, angriest bear he had ever seen. But when the angry bear saw how polite Papa was, he remembered his manners too. He explained that he had stopped short because a mama duck and her ducklings had crossed in front of him. Then he and Papa Bear looked at their bumpers and saw that no harm had been done. “As I was saying,” said Papa as they continued on their way, “it’s very important for us to remember our manners at all times—and I want to thank you, Sister, for reminding me to remember mine.” “You’re very welcome, I’m sure,” said Sister Bear politely.

THE BEAR FAMILY POLITENESS PLAN RUDENESS FORGETTING “PLEASE” OR “THANK YOU” PUSHING OR SHOVING INTERRUPTING NAME CALLING REACHING AT TABLE PLAYING WITH FOOD RUDE NOISES BANGING DOOR FORGETTING “EXCUSE ME” HOGGING BATHROOM PENALTY SWEEP FRONT STEPS BEAT 2 RUGS DUST DOWNSTAIRS CLEAN CELLAR CLEAN YARD WASH DISHES WEED GARDEN CLEAN ATTIC EMPTY GARAGE PUT OUT TRASH

SILLYHEAD! FUZZBRAIN! NOODLEPUSS! THE BEAR FAMILY POLITENESS PLAN THE BEAR FAMILY POLITENESS PLAN RUDENESS FORGETTING “PLEASE” OR “THANK YOU” PUSHING OR SHOVING INTERRUPTING NAME CALLING REACHING AT TABLE PLAYING WITH FOOD UDE NOISES BANGING DOOR FORGETTING “EXCUSE ME” HOGGING BATHROOM PENALTY SWEEP FRONT STEPS BEAT 2 RUGS DUST DOWNSTAIRS CLEAN CELLAR CLEAN YARD WASH DISHES WEED GARDEN CLEAN ATTIC EMPTY GARAGE PUT OUT TRASH TOYS STOP BONK! B. BEARS DUCK CROSSING

12. 1986 Get stage fright

On the way to school one day Sister Bear, Brother Bear, and Cousin Freddie got to talking about an important subject: their teachers. “Teacher Bob is tough but fair,” said Freddie, who was in the same class as Brother. Brother agreed. “How about your teacher?” he asked Sister. “Is she easy or hard?” “Teacher Jane isn’t easy or hard,” Sister Said. “She’s good.” Then the bell rang and the cubs were ready for the school day. The reason Sister thought Teacher Jane was good was that she made things interesting. When they were learning to add and subtract, Teacher jane set up a pretend store with play money and a toy cash register. It helped the cubs learn, and it was fun. When the class was studying words and ideas, they made posters. That helped them learn too. And sometimes in reading class, instead of just reading from their books, they acted out the stories. That’s what they were doing with Grizzlystiltskin, the story of the funny old elf-bear who was sure that nobody could ever guess his name. Sister Bear was acting out the part of the miller’s daughter who becomes a princess and has to spin straw into gold. They had come to the part where the princess has one last change to guess the elf-bear’s name: “Ah, good sir,” read Sister in a loud, clear voice. “We’ve come to the end of our guessing game, because I say...Grizzlystiltskin is your name!” That’s when Grizzlystiltskin flies into a range and disappears in a puff of smoke—and the princess lives happily ever after. “That was very good, class,” said Teacher Jane. “So good, in fact, that I have a surprise for you. I’m in charge of the school play this year, and guess what—they play is going to be Grizzlystiltskin, and some of you will have parts in it!” Then she gave out the parts. One of them had Sister’s name on it. What fun! What excitement! Sister was going to be in the school play on the auditorium stage with scenery and costumes and makeup and everything. It turned out that Brother and Freddie had gotten parts too. Brother was going to be the woodsbear who finds out the elf-bear’s name, and Freddie was going to play the part of Grizzlystiltskin himself. “Who are you going to be?” Freddie asked Sister. When Sister, who hadn’t even thought to look, turned to her part, it said THE PRINCESS. “Wow!” said Brother and Freddie. “That’s the main part!” “Well, how about that!” said Papa Bear when he heard the news. “My little princess is going to play the part of the princess! Say, we’d better tell Grizzly Gramps and Gran! And Uncle Willie and Aunt Min!” “Calm yourself, dear!” said Mama, taking Papa aside. “Sister has a lot of work ahead of her and she doesn’t need a lot of fuss and excitement.” “Hmm,” said Papa. “You’re absolutely right, my dear.” “Yeah, why all the fuss?” said Brother. “It’s just a dopey school play. I already know my whole part... “Hear me, oh, Princess! I was deep in the forest and this is what I heard: The princess’s firstborn shall be mine! If she had guesses nine times nine, she could not win this guessing game, ‘cause Grizzlystiltskin is my name!” “See?” he said. “Nothing to it!” But Sister wasn’t so sure. She was beginning to feel a little nervous about the whole thing. The next day, when Teacher Jane asked Sister to take a message to the office, Sister decided to take a shortcut through the auditorium. She had been in the auditorium many times, of course, but she had never been on the stage, but she had never been on the stage. She climbed the steps and looked out over the rows of seats. It looked enormous. Then she imagined all the scats filled with everybody in the school and Grizzly Gramps and Gran and Uncle Willie and Aunt Min. It looked even more enormous. “Why the long face?” asked Brother on the way home from school. Sister told him she was worried about the play. “Relax,” he said. “There’s nothing to it. It’s a piece of cake. “Why, I can do my part standing on my head...” “...hanging from a branch...and from inside a hollow log!” Cousin Freddie and the gang thought Brother was pretty funny. But Sister didn’t even smile. That evening Sister’s worries all came out. That evening Sister’s worries all came out. “Reading a part in class just isn’t the same as getting up in front of the whole school! And I have to learn it all by heart!” she wailed. “How am I ever going to do it?” “The same was you learn anything else,” said Mama. “Line by line, page by page. Papa and I will help you. “Besides, you already know lots of things by heart. Besides, you already know lots of things by heart—the alphabet, dozens of songs and rhymes, the Pledge of Allegiance. Why, I bet you know enough things by heart to fill a book.” “You already know the story. All you have to do is learn your part and practice.” That’s what Sister did. She learned her part line by line, page by page. And she practiced. She practiced in her room in front of her toys. She practiced in the field in front of her forest friends. She practiced in front of Mama and Papa. “That was wonderful, Sweetie!” said Papa, applauding. “Letter perfect!” “Yes,” sighed Sister, “but practicing in front of my toys and forest friends and you and Mama just isn’t the same as getting up on the stage in front of the whole school. How do I practice for that?” “Sweetie,” said Mama, “there are some things in life you can’t practice—you’ve just got to do them.” “But what if I get nervous and scared?” she asked. “Oh, but you will,” said Mama. “I will?” she said. “Of course! said Mama. “Everybody gets nervous when they have to perform in front of an audience—even famous opera singers and star athletes. But if you know it’s natural and you expect to be a little nervous, it won’t really bother you that much—and you’ll do yourself proud! “And besides,” she added, “you’ll be having a big rehearsal in the auditorium. That’ll help. Now where’s that brother of yours? I’ve got to finish his costume. I do wish he’d take this thing a little more seriously.” “Don’t worry about him, Mama,” said Sister. “He can do his part standing on his head.” The rehearsal did help, but an empty auditorium still wasn’t the same as a real live audience. And now, at last, the moment had come! The curtain was opening on the Bear country School’s production of Grizzlystiltskin! And there was Sister all alone on the big stage looking out at the whole school and Grizzly Gramps and Gran and Uncle Willie and Aunt Min. It was a little scary. But it was also very exciting. Then she heard a loud, clear voice saying, “I am the miller’s daughter and woe is me, for my father has told the king I can spin straw into gold and, in truth, I cannot!” It took her a split second to realize that the voice was hers! From there on everything went beautifully. There was one little rough spot near the end when it was time for Brother to do his part. He came on stage in his handsome woodsbear costume, looking bout at the hundreds of eyes staring at him...and completely forgot what he was supposed to say! “I can’t remember my lines! he whispered. “Why don’t you try standing on your head?” whispered Sister. But then she took pity on him and helped him with his lines. The play ended magnificently with Grizzlystiltskin flying into a fury and disappearing in a puff of smoke. The applause was long and loud. After the show Mama and Papa came backstage. “Terrific show!” said Papa. “Terrific!” “Congratulations,” said Mama, “on a job well done!” “A piece of cake,” said Princess Sister.

Bear Country School OUR STORE WE ADD AND SUBTRACT big bigger biggest WORLDS and IDEAS small smaller smallest Sister’s Part HEAR ME, OH, PRINCE...HEAR ME, OH, PRINCE...HEAR ME, OH, PRINCE... PRINCESS MILLER’S DAUGHTER OH, GOOD SIR... WE’VE ME TO THE END OF OUR GUESSING GAME... BECAUSE GRIZZYSTILTSSKIN IS YOUR NAME!... CLOUD SPRAY

13. 1986 No Girls Allowed

14. 1986 The Week at Grandma’s

Once in a while the Bear family, who lived in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country, got out the family snapshots and looked at them. “What are these?” asked Sister Bear, picking up a book of photos. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen these before.” There were pictures of bears playing tennis, canoeing, dancing, and having all sorts of fun. The bears looked like Mama and Papa, only they were younger and thinner. “They’re pictures of Papa and me on our honeymoon,” said Mama with a smile. “At Grizzly Mountain Lodge,” said Papa. “We had a wonderful time!” “What’s a honeymoon?” asked Brother. “A honeymoon is a special trip couples take when they get married,” explained Mama. “Getting married is a very special happening and celebrating it with a trip is an old custom.” “As a matter of fact” said Papa, “we’ve decided to go on a second honeymoon. We’re going back to the same place and play tennis, go canoeing, and have fun!” “It’ll be lovely,” said Mama. “A second honeymoon sounds like a pretty good idea to me,” said Brother. “Me, too,” said Sister. They scooted out of the room and were back in a jiffy with their vacation things. “Oh, you won’t be coming,” said Papa. “Honeymoons, even second honeymoons, are just for grownups, not for cubs.” “But... but what’s going to happen to us?” asked Sister. “It just so happens,” said Mama, “that Gran has been after me to let you spend a week with her and Gramps. And this will be the perfect opportunity.” “A whole week?” said Brother. “But we’ve never stayed with anybody that long! said Sister. “Well,” said Papa, taking a few practice swings with his tennis racket, “there’s got to be a time for everything.” “What will we do for a whole week?” asked the cubs. “Where will we sleep? What will we eat?” “Goodness!” said Mama. “Such a fuss about a simple thing like spending a week at Grandma’s.” It didn’t seem like a simple thing to the cubs. They loved Gramps and Gran very much, but... well, they just weren’t Mama and Papa. Besides, Gramps and Gran were sort of...old. “What are you taking with you?” Sister asked Brother when it was time to pack. “I’m taking two books, my jacks, and my teddy, of course.” “These,” he said, holding up some books and his best yo-yo. Papa put their suitcases in the car trunk last so that when they got to Gran’s, unloading was as easy as one-to-three. Then, after lots of big bear hugs and kisses, the happy second honeymooners were on their way. “It certainly is good to see young folks having fun,” said Gan as she waved good-bye. “We’re the young folks,” muttered the cubs. “We’re the ones who are supposed to have fun.” “I’m sure you’re hungry after your ride,” said Gran when they went in. “How about some of y special honey nut cookies and milk?” “No thanks, Gran,” said Sister. “I’m not hungry right now.” “Hey, these are really good,” said Brother. Sister sneaked a taste. They were good, but... well, they just weren’t Mama’s. “Now let’s get you up to your room so you can get settled,” said Gramps. The cubs reached for their bags, but before you could say “Grizzly Gramps,” they were gathered up, bags and all, and carried up the steep stairs. Gramps certainly was strong for someone so...old. The room at the top of the stairs was very nice—very nice, indeed, but... well, it just wasn’t home. “Gramps,” said Sister, “where do you suppose Mama and Papa are right now?” “Well,” said Gramps, “I reckon they’re still on the road, just pulling into sight of Grizzly Mountain Lodge.” After they unpacked their things, Gramps thought the cubs might like to explore around the house. While it wasn’t home, it was an interesting house. There was the attic crowded with all sorts of interesting things... Gran’s kitchen with its yummy tastes and smells... and Gramps’ den. Gramps knew how to build a ship in a bottle. When the cubs asked him how it was done, he just smiled. “What do you suppose Mama and Papa are doing now?” they asked then. “I reckon they’ve gotten into their tennis clothes and are swatting the ball back and forth,” he said. Over the next few days Brother and Sister found lots to do. They helped Gran feed her bird friends—more kinds than they had ever seen in one place. And Gran knew all their names. They helped Grams cut and smooth twigs for a new ship in a bobble. It turned out that he built them outside the bottle and then slid them in. It was pretty tricky. They went fishing in a special place Gramps knew about. “Well,” said Gramps as they returned with a fine catch, “I reckon that your mama and papa are out canoeing right now.” “I certainly hope they’re having fun!” said Sister. “Because we sure are!” “Hmm. Better get these chairs in,” said Gramps after a fine fish fry. “It’s going to rain tomorrow.” “How do you know?” asked Brother. “I can feel it in my bones,” answered Gramps. It turned out Gramps was right. “Good,” said Brother. “We’ll be able to relax a little.” Sister got out her jacks and he started to play with his yo-yo. “Used to be pretty good with one of those myself,” said Gramps. Was he ever! Not only could Gramps make the yo-yo sleep and walk-the-dog, he could even do baby-in-cradle and round-the-world! That evening, after a refreshing nap, they all went to Gramps and Gran’s regular Friday night square dance. Gramps and Gran didn’t just watch. They do-si-doed with the best of them. They even won a prize—for Friskiest Couple. “Goodness!” said Sister in the morning. “This week really flew by!” “And we learned so much,” added Brother, practicing baby-in-the-cradle. “Gramps and Gran, how come you know so much?” asked Sister. “So many things! Why, you can even feel the weather in your bones!” “That’s one of the good things about being an older person,” said Gramps, smiling. “You learn something every day. So that by the time you’re old enough to be a grandparent, you know quite a lot. “Gee,” said Sister, “I guess you and Gran are so old you must know everything!” “Oh, no,” said Gramps, laughing. “You never stop learning. Why, just this week we learned something very special. We learned how absolutely wonderful it is to be grandparents and have lovely grandcubs.” Then Gramps and Gran swept their grandcubs up in a big hug. The next thing they knew, a familiar beep! beep! was heard. It was Papa tooting the horn. He and Mama were back from their second honeymoon and it was time for the cubs to go home. After saying good-byes and thank-yous, the Bear family piled into the car and headed home. No sooner were they on their way than Brother and Sister were bubbling over with the fun and excitement of their week at Grandma’s. “Well,” said Papa, “sounds like you had a pretty good time.” “Oh, we did!” said Sister. “Papa, sometime you might want to go on a third honeymoon. Then we could spend another week at Grandma’s. “A third honeymoon?” said Papa. “I don’t think anyone’s ever gone on a third honeymoon.” “Well,” said Sister, “there has to be a first time for everything!”

GRANDMA’S PHOTOS PHOTOS Welcome

15. 1986 Trouble with Friends

16. 1987 The BAD HABIT

Sister Bear, who lived with her mama, papa, and brother in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country, had been going to school for a quite a while. First there had been nursery school, which was pure fun—playing with dolls and blocks, rolling clay snakes, and scribbling with crayons. Next had come kindergarten. That was fun too. There were marching games and rhythm band. She also learned a lot of numbers in kindergarten—and most of the alphabet. Now Sister was in first grade. Regular school was different. It was still fun and she liked Teacher Jane very much, but it wasn’t all fun. There was quite a lot of work—spelling, number problems, all kinds of things. In regular school you have to concentrate—and sometimes when you concentrate, you form little nervous habits. That’s what happened to some of the cubs in Teacher Jane’s class. Lizzy twirled her fur. Twirl, twirl, twirl. Freddy scratched his head. Scratch, scratch, scratch. Norman sucked his thumb. Suck, suck, suck. And Sister nibbled her nails. Nibble, nibble, nibble, nibble. Before she knew it, she had nibbled them down to nubbins. In fact, she nibbled them down so far that some of her fingers were getting sore. “Oh, dear!” said Mama Bear to Sister when the cubs got home from school one day. “You’ve nibbled your nails down to nubbins. In fact, you’ve nibbled them cleaned off. How did it happen?” “I’m not exactly sure, Mama,” Sister said. “But some of them are getting sore.” “Hmm,” said Mama. “Well, here’s what we’ll do. We’ll put a little medicine on the sore ones and bits of adhesive tape on all of them. That will remind you not to nibble and will give them a change to grow back” The bits of tape helped Sister remember not to nibble, but they also got in the way when she tried to do certain things. It’s very hard to hole a pencil with tape all over your fingertips, or tune the TV, or scratch when you have an itch. But worst of all, the bits of tape told the whole world that Sister Bear was a nail biter. The next morning, when sister lined up for school, Lizzy Bruin and some others began pointing and teasing. “Sister nibbles her nails! Sister nibbles her nails!” It didn’t take Sister long to decide to pull off those bits of tape! And without the tape, she forgot to remember not to nibble. She forgot during school. She forgot on the bus. She even forgot as she and Brother climbed off the bus. “You’re going to have to cut that out, Sis,” said Brother, “or you’ll get to be a regular full-time nail biter.” “I’m afraid your brother’s right,” said Mama, who was organizing the wheelbarrow for some garden work. “I don’t mean to nag, but nail biting is a very difficult habit to break.” “Habit?” asked Sister, making fists so that her nubby, nibbled-off nails wouldn’t show. “What’s a habit?” “That’s a good question,” said Mama. “Come along while I plant these tulip bulbs Grizzly Gran sent over and we’ll talk about it. “A habit,” Mama said as she pushed the wheelbarrow along the well-worn path, “is something you do so often you don’t even have to think about it. Habits are a very important part of our lives. And most of them are good—like brushing your teeth and combing your fur when you get up in the morning, and looking both ways before you cross a road. But some habits aren’t so good.” “Like nail biting?” asked Sister. “You would like to have your nice nails grow back, wouldn’t you?” as Mama’s answer. “Oh, yes!” said Sister. “But I keep forgetting! Why is it so hard to remember?” “Well,” said Mama, “it’s sort of like this path. I’ve wheeled this barrow over it so many times that it’s worn a deep rut right down the middle. And it keeps getting deeper every time I use it. Why, it’s so deep now that I can’t get out of it without a little help.” “That’s the way it is with a bad habit—the more you use it, the harder it is to get out of it. Here, this is where I want to plant the bulbs.” “What about my nail-biting habit?” asked Sister as she helped Mama out of the deep rut. “How am I going to get out of it?” “You just need a little help, that’s all,” said Mama. “Let’s land Gran’s tulips while I think about it. And later I’ll talk to your papa. He may have some ideas.” “I could read the riot act to her,” suggested Papa. “You know: ‘Nail biting is an outrageous, disgraceful habit and if you don’t stop it immediately—‘” “Dear me, no!” said Mama. “Nail biting is a kind of nervous habit, and shouting and threatening will just make her more nervous.” “I suppose so,” said Papa thoughtfully. “Perhaps some sort of reward would help. A bit of money—Let’s say a dime for every day she doesn’t bite her nails.” Before Mama could answer, Sister Bear, who had been nervously nibbling in the next room, popped in and said, “A dime—ten whole cents every day just for not biting my nails?” “That’s right,” said Papa. “Until the habit’s broken.” “I’ll never nibble again!” she said as she thought of all those lovely dimes she was going to get. But the way it turned out, she didn’t get a single dime. All she got was discouraged. A day is a long time and habits are powerful—especially bad habits. Even with the promise of a dime, Sister couldn’t remember not to nibble. Mama and Papa got discouraged too. “Oh, well,” sighed Mama. “Life goes on. I must call Gran and thank her for the tulip bulbs.” “Oh, you’re very welcome, my dear,” said Gran when Mama called. “And how is everything at your house?...Is that so?...You know, I was a nail biter when I was a cub and my mama helped me to stop. What have you tried so far?... Um...Uh-huh...Well, I think you’re on the right track with the dime, but instead of a dime, and instead of giving it to her at the end of the day...” “What an interesting idea,” said Mama as she listened to wise old Grizzly Gran. So they tried Gran’s idea. Instead of a dime at the end of each day, they gave Sister ten pennies—one for each nail—at the beginning of each day. Ten pennies to keep—unless she nibbled. And with those pennies in her pocket, jiggling when she got on the school bus, jingling when she jumped rope in the schoolyard...just waiting to be remembered when some nail decided it needed a nibble... the plan worked! Not perfectly. It’s hard to break a habit, and Sister had to give back some of those pennies. But in ten days she had ninety-three pennies! But even better: she had ten fine fingernails. Great for picking things up, turning the TV, and scratching itches. And the next time she played jacks she got all the way to tensies! “Phew!” said Papa Bear. “I’m glad that’s over.” “Yes, indeed!” agreed Mama, breathing a great sigh of relief. That’s when Brother Bear looked at his fingernails and piped up, “You know, I think I might start biting my nails—I could use the money.” “I certainly hope you’re joking!” roared Papa. “Because if you’re not—” “I’m joking. I’m joking,” interrupted Brother. And he was—sort of.

11111 2222 3333 4444 Aa Aa Bb Bb CcCc HAT BAT CAT BALL TALL WALL UP/DOWN BIG/SMALL OUT/IN 3+4=7 3+4=7 2+5=7 2+5=7 SCHOOL BUS

17. 1987 The Trouble at School

Though Brother and Sister Bear were usually very healthy, they occasionally caught cold. So when Brother came home from school one day sneezing and wheezing. Mama Bear knew just what to do. She took his temperature, tucked him into bed, and went right to the phone and called Dr. Grizzly. “Sneezing and wheezing and a temperature of a hundred and one?” said Dr. Grizzly. “Keep him in bed, give him plenty of liquids, and keep him home from school until his temperature is back to normal.” Mama followed the doctor’s orders, and little by little Brother’s temperature began to go down. “I feel a little better,” he said. “May I get out of bed?” “I’m afraid not,” said Mama. “The doctor wants you to stay in bed.” “But there’s no reason why your stay shouldn’t be as pleasant as possible... Papa!” she called. “Would you bring up the portable TV?” The portable had remote control, and pretty soon Brother was having a fine time switching from one cartoon show to another. When he tired of TV he got out his comic books, and when he tired of those, Mama brought him his dinosaur collection. There was no doubt about it—except for his sniffles, Brother Bear was having a pretty good time. So when Sister Bear brought home a folder of schoolwork for him, he hardly looked at it—he was much too busy having fun. But while he was at home having fun, his fellow students at school were hard at work... In the classroom, where Teacher Bob was teaching a new math lesson. They had learned to add, subtract, and multiply. Now they were learning to divide. On the soccer field, where Coach Bruin was getting the team ready for the big game against Beartown... “Cousin Freddy!” he called. “Take Brother’s place at forward. He’s out sick.” “Yes, sir!” said Freddy. This was the chance he’d been waiting for. It wasn’t until Brother was all better and ready to go back to school that he remembered the folder of work. “Oh well,” he thought, “I’ll study it on the bus.” But that’s where he heard about Freddy and the soccer team. He was so upset he forgot all about studying. When Coach Bruin had extra practice during early gym, Brother became even more upset. It wasn’t easy watching Freddy take his place on the team. Then, when Brother got back to class, Teacher Bob said, “I certainly hope you studied that work folder, because we’re going to have a quiz.” “A quiz?” said Brother. “On what?” “On division, of course,” said Teacher Bob as he handed out the quiz papers. Brother might have managed even then. He was good with numbers and might have worked things out if only he’d been able to concentrate. But all he could think about was Cousin Freddy out there kicking field goals while he sat on the bench. The quiz was a disaster. Not only did Brother get every problem wrong, but Teacher Bob wrote on the paper: “Very poor! Must be signed by parent.” Brother didn’t know which was worse: the soccer mess or the quiz disaster. What would he say to Mama and Papa when they asked him how things had gone at school? He was so busy feeling sorry for himself on the bus ride home that he didn’t notice that Sister was coming down with a bad case of the sneezes and wheezes. “Oh, dear!” said Mama when she saw Sister. “You’ve caught Brother’s cold. Into bed with you!” She and Papa were so busy attending to Sister that they forgot to ask Brother how things went at school...and he didn’t tell them! And the next morning, when the school bus came, Brother didn’t get on the bus! He hid in the tall grass until the bus was out of sight. The squirrels and bluebirds were puzzled—Brother was usually happy and cheerful. But not this morning. This morning he looked unhappy—and angry, too. “Phooey!” Brother shouted, kicking a stone. But kicking the stone reminded him of soccer and that just made him angrier. The bluebirds took off and the squirrels scattered. “Phooey on soccer!” he shouted, stomping off through the woods. Stomp! Stomp! Stomp! Grasshoppers hopped. Toads stood stock-still and pretended they were bumps on a log. “Phooey on school!” Brother shouted, stomping out of the woods. Pansies hid their faces. Ladybugs flew away home. “And,” he said, reaching into his schoolbag, “phooey on division!” He had come to the top of a big hill. He took out the quiz, folded it into a paper airplane, and sailed it high into the air. The hill overlooked a swampy, overgrown bog. As Brother watched the quiz circle and swoop he noticed something out of the corner of his eye—a familiar house at the edge of the bog. Grizzly Gramps was working on a ship model when he heard the knock. Gran was making cookies. They weren’t expecting visitors and they certainly weren’t expecting Brother—especially during school hours. It didn’t take long for the whole story to come out. Gramps and Gran listened quietly as Brother told them about catching cold, the folder of work, the soccer mess, the quiz disaster, the missed bus, and the paper airplane. “Come with me, young feller,” said Gramps. “I want to show you something.” Gramps took Brother by the hand and led him deep into the bog. “There!” he said. “That’s what I want to show you.” It was a very old wagon sunk almost out of sight in a muddy pond. “How did it get there?” asked Brother. “It wasn’t easy,” said Gramps. “I went to a lot of trouble getting that old wagon into this swamp.” Then, with a twinkle in his eye, he said, “Just the way you did getting in over your head at school! “It happed a long time ago when I took a wrong turn—just the way you did when you didn’t study that schoolwork that Teacher Bob sent home. Well, instead of admitting my mistake and backing up, I just pushed ahead until I was in so deep there was no getting out.” “And you lost the wagon,” said Brother. “Yep,” said Gramps. “But I learned a valuable lesson. If you find yourself on the wrong road, don’t just keep on going until you’re in over your head—back up and start over on the right road.” “How am I going to do that?” asked Brother. “Oh, I think we can manage—but first, look over there,” Gramps said, pointing. There it was: the paper airplane—caught in a berry bush. “What do you think they’ll say?” asked Brother later as they bounced along in Gramps’s pickup. “We’ll find out soon enough,” said Gramps, pulling to a stop in front of the big tree house. “And let’s not forget Gran’s bag of cookies. They’re her finest.” Mama and Papa weren’t exactly pleased when they heard about the big mess Brother had gotten himself into. But they didn’t holler and pound the table, either—not even Papa. He looked like he might be going to when he saw the paper he had to sign—Gramps had tried to flatten it out but it was still pretty wrinkled. “What happened to this? he asked. “Oh,” said Gramps. “It just sort of got folded a bit.” That’s when he brought out Gran’s cookies. There were ten of them. “Let’s see, now,” he said, “there are five of us counting Sister. So how many cookies do we each get?” “Two, of course,” said Brother, dividing them up. “Don’t look now, young feller,” said Gramps with a wink, “but you just divided then by five!” “Is that all there is to dividing?” said Brother. “That’s all,” said Gramps. “Come along,” said Mama in a no-nonsense voice. “Where are we going?” asked Brother. “To school,” Mama said as they got in the car. “But it’s so late,” protested Brother. “It’s never too late to correct a mistake,” Mama said, and off they went. Brother got to class just in time for a retest. The class hadn’t done very well on the division quiz, so Teacher Bob was giving them a second chance. Brother really concentrated and did much better. And that afternoon he got a second chance at soccer, too. It was the day of the big game against Beartown and things weren’t going very well. “Brother,” said Coach Bruin, “I want you to go in for Freddy. I don’t think he’s quite ready for first team.” “Glad to help, Coach,” Brother said as he ran out onto the field. “You know what they say—it’s never too late to correct a mistake.”

AH-CHOO DIPLOMA DR. GERT GRIZZLY SOCCER IS HOW I GET MY KICKS SOCCER IS HOW I GET MY KICKS MAKE-UP WORK 3/96 = 32 MAKE-UP WORK VERY POOR! MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT SCHOOL BUS AH-CHOO SCHOOL BUS SCHOOL BUS STOP AH CHOO MAKE-UP WORK VERY POOR! MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT SCHOOL BUS SCHOOL BUS STOP VERY POOR! MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT VERY GOOD! FAIR HOME TEAM 0 to 0 VISITOR 1 to 2

18. 1988 The Bad dream

Brother Bear was just crazy about Space Grizzlies. Space Grizzlies were little toy action figures that you could collect. Sister Bear didn’t like them much. She thought they were dumb (and a little scary). Mama Bear didn’t mind them except when Brother brought them to the table or left them on the stairs. Papa Bear didn’t care about them one way or the other. But Brother cared about them a lot. He cared about them so much that he did chores for neighbors to make extra money so he could buy more. He had quite a few. But the store had more. A lot more. He was saving up to buy Sleezo’s Cloud Castle. Sleezo was the evilest of all the Space Grizzlies, and the wicked-looking Cloud Castle was where he planned all his evil deeds. When Brother had saved enough money, he went along on a shopping trip to the Bear Country Mall and made his purchase. The Cloud Castle came in a big box, and he could hardly wait to get home to play with it. But as he was getting into the car, he saw something that was even more exciting than the Cloud Castle. It was a movie poster. It said: COMING SOON. SPACE GRIZZLIES—THE MOVIE! “A Space Grizzlies movie!” he cried. “It looks great! I can’t wait to see it!” “I can,” said Sister. “Looks scary to me.” “May I see it when it comes, Mama?” asked Brother. “May I, please?” “Hmm,” said Mama. “We’ll see when the time comes.” When they got home, Brother opened his new Cloud Castle, got out all his Space Grizzlies, and was all set to play the biggest Space Grizzly game ever. But... he had nobody to play with. Nobody, that is, except Sister. “Want to play Space Grizzlies, Sis?” he asked. “No way,” she said. “Aw, come on,” he said. “I’ll play any game you want if you’ll play Space Grizzlies with me.” “Any three games,” she said driving a hard bargain. “Which three?” he asked warily. “Papa dolls, jacks, and beanbags,” she answered. “Papa dolls, jacks, and beanbags!” he protested. “Give me a break!” “Take it or leave it,” she said. He took it. And after some lively sessions of paper dolls, jacks, and beanbags, it was time for...—SPACE GRIZZLIES! “I am Sleezo, evil king of the universe! roared Brother. “Calling all spaceships! Seek and destroy the planet Magongo, home of my sworn enemy, Heero the Magnificent!” “Oh, no, you don’t!” Sister shouted back. “I am Heero the Magnificent! One touch from my sleep wand and your evil ways will be ended!” They played until Mama called them for dinner. “Brother,” said Mama, “how many times must I tell you—no Space Grizzlers at the table!” Papa was taking a peek at the Bear Country News. “Brother,” he said, “that movie of yours starts tomorrow.” “May I see it, Mama, please?” asked Brother. “I don’t know why not,” she said. “Why haven’t been to the movies in a while.” “I know why not,” said Sister. “Because it’s scary.” “That’s no problem,” said Papa. “There are lots of movies to choose from.” He was right. The Bear Country Theater was really four movie houses in one, and there were usually four different movies playing. “This looks good,” said Mama. “The Magic Toeshoes. It’s a musical about a ballerina.” So when they got to the movies to the next evening. Mama, Papa, and Sister got in line for The Magic Toeshoes, and Brother joined a bunch of his friends in line for Space Grizzlies. The Magic Toeshoes told the story of a young bear who wanted to e a ballerina. But every time she tried to dance on her toes she wiggled and wobbled. The old ballet master took pity on her and gave her a pair of magic toeshoes which cured her wiggles and wobbles. But on the night of the big ballet, she left her magic toeshoes on the bus! Without them she was all wiggles and wobbles again. That’s when the ballet master told her they weren’t magic at all! They were just ordinary toeshoes. The wobbly ballerina got her confidence back and danced beautifully ever after. The Space Grizzly movie was about Space Grizzlies, of course: great monstrous big-screen ones who zapped and zoomed through space until that final intergalactic shootout. It was very exciting and not a little scary. It was dark when the Bear family got home, so it was off to be for the cubs. It was already late for Sister, and she went right to sleep. But Brother was so excited by the movie that he lay awake for quite a while. He was just about to doze off when Sister woke up screaming. “Hel-lp!” she screamed. “They’re after me!” “Who’s after you? asked Brother. “Space Grizzlies!” she wailed. “Thousands of them!” “Calm down, sillyhead. It’s only a dream,” he said. But Sister leaped out of bed and ran into Mama and Papa’s room. The little silly, Brother thought. Imagine—being afraid of a dopey dream. Then he yawned, turned over, and went to sleep. Mama and Papa tried to calm Sister. They took her into their bed and hugged her. “Tell us about your dream,” said Mama. “Dream?” Sister said. “Yes,” said Papa. “You must have had a nightmare. That’s the word for a bad dream.” “But it was so real!” she said, calming down a bit. “That’s how it is with dreams,” he said. “it’s as if they’re really happening, but they’re not—they’re just in your mind.” “Can you tell us your dream? asked Mama. “It was awful!” Sister said. “I was a ballet star dancing on my toes, and then the stage turned into a giant beanbag board and the Space Grizzlies came out of the beanbag holes and chased me and I fell down one of the holes.” “I kept falling and falling and then I woke up. It was awful!” she sailed again, and buried her face in Mama’s nightgown. “I’m sure it was, sweetie,” said Mama. “But it was also very interesting.” “Interesting?” Sister said in a puzzled voice. “Oh yes,” said Mama. “you see, even though you go to sleep, your mind keeps right on thinking. But it doesn’t think in a sensible way. It takes all the things you were thinking or were nervous about during the day and puts them together all jumbled like a mixed-up zigsaw puzzle.” “You mean—like the ballet dancer from the movie?” said Sister. “Sure,” said Papa. “And the beanbag board from playing beanbags with Brother—” she added. “And the Space Grizzlies—” began Mama. “Where from playing Space Grizzlies with Brother and from seeing the movie poster!” Sister said. “Exactly,” said Papa. “Say,” she said. “That is interesting!” That’s when they heard Brother. “Hel-l-lp!” he screamed. “They’re after me! They’re after me!” Then he raced into the room, jumped into the bed, and hid his face in Papa’s pajamas. “Calm down, son” said Papa. “It was just a bad dream.” “A nightmare,” added Sister. “That’s another word for bad dream.” “Can you tell us about it?” asked Mama. “Well, I was eating dinner and the food turned into Space Grizzlies—gigantic ones, and they chased me and I turned into a paper doll and my clothes were flying off! It was awful!” “You’re awake now, dear,” said Mama. “Everything’s going to be all right.” “But Mama,” he said, “it was so real.” “Of course it was,” said Sister. “That’s the way dreams are. Let me explain it to you.” And she did. Some dreams make cubs laugh. Some dreams make them cry. It’s interesting to think about what they dream and why.

SPACE GRIZZLIES HEADQUARTERS TOYS BEAR COUNTRY BARN THEATER COMING SOON SPACE GRIZZLIES THE MOVIE SPACE DOOR BUT STOP

19. 1988 Double Dare

20. 1989 The In-Crowd

It was early summer in Bear Country. School had been out for a few weeks, and Brother and Sister Bear had settled into a comfortable routine of bike riding, playing ball, exploring, and just generally having fun. They had chores, of course—keeping their room neat, helping with yard cleanup, and, when he got very busy, helping Papa Bear in his shop. Mostly, though, they were looking forward to a carefree summer of fun and relaxation. But sometimes the road ahead is not as smooth as we would like. Sometimes there are unexpected potholes in the road of life, and Sister Bear, as it turned out, was headed for a real wheel-buster. With school closed, the playground was the gathering place for Brother, Sister, and the neighborhood cubs. It had swings and slides, a jungle gym, a track, and a sandbox for little cubs. There were also jump ropes, Frisbees, and soccer balls you could get from Miss Mack, who was in charge. On most days Sister would stop off for her best friend, Lizzy Bruin, and they would go to the playground together. After a swing and a slide or two they would get a jump rope from Miss Mack. Lately, they had been getting two ropes for Double Dutch. In Double Dutch, the jumper jumps over two ropes that are being turned in opposite directions. It isn’t easy, but Sister and Lizzy and some of their friends had been practicing and were getting pretty good at it. That’s what was happening the day the trouble started. Sister and Lizzy had two ropes and were looking for other cubs to join them. But where was everybody? Where were Anna, Millie, and Linda, their usual jumpmates? As they looked around they spied a small crowd at the far corner of the playground near the bike rack. That’s when Anna ran by. “How about a little Double Dutch?” called Sister. “Can’t now!” shouted Anna. “There’s a new cub with a terrific ten-speed bike and she’s letting us take turns riding it!” It sounded interesting, and even though Sister and Lizzy were still a bit small for two-wheelers, they decided to investigate. The new cub not only had a pretty sharp bike—it was purple and had ten speeds and hand brakes—she was pretty sharp herself. She wore purple stretch pants, a designer top, a yellow headband, and hoop earrings. “Her name’s Queenie McBear,” whispered Anna, “and she just moved into the neighborhood. She has pierced ears!” Sister pushed through the crowd, gave the newcomer who was taller than she was and a little older, a big smile, and said, “Hi! I’m Sister Bear!” Queenie smiled too, but it wasn’t exactly friendly. “Sister Bear?” she said. “Now what kind of a name is that? And you’ve got to be kidding with those clothes—a pink ruffled jumper and a hair bow?” “Well...” said Sister, a little confused. “it’s my mid of name. And as for my clothes...” “Why don’t you and your little friend go play in the sandbox?” interrupted Queenie, not giving Sister a chance to finish. Then she got on her bike and shouted, “Come on, gang! Let’s go to the Dairy Bear for some soft ice cream! My treat!” And off she zoomed down the road. Jumpmates Anna, Millie, and Linda looked a little embarrassed, but soft ice cream was soft ice cream, so they got on their bikes with the rest and followed Queenie down the road. Now Sister was very confused—and upset, too. “I don’t get it,” said Lizzy. “All you did was say hi...Say, I know what,” she added, trying to cheer her up, “I heard that Miss Mack is organizing a Double-Dutch tournament with prizes and everything! Come on! Let’s go sign up!” Sister Bear didn’t even answer. She was so upset that she just turned and went home. She was usually so cheerful after a session at the playground that it didn’t take long for Mama Bear to figure out that something must have gone wrong. Papa and Brother Bear noticed too. After supper, the whole story of Queenie came out—her bike, her sharp clothes, and how she’d made fun of Sister and then treated everybody to soft ice cream. “Everybody except me and Lizzy,” she said glumly. “What did she make fun of?” asked Mama. “My name, my clothes, my hair bow...me!” said Sister. “Oh dear,” said Mama. “That wasn’t very nice, not very nice at all—maybe she was just trying to make an impression.” “Well, she certainly made an impression on me,” said Sister. “A bad impression.” Of course, Mama had been a cub once and she knew about in-crowds and cubs like Queenie who tried to build themselves up by putting other cubs down. But she also knew that it didn’t do much good to stew about it. So she gave Sister a hug and said, “Don’t fret, sweetie. I’m sure things will look a lot brighter in the morning.” Things did look a lot brighter in the morning, and Sister Bear was once again her confident self. She decided that today she would ride her trike to the playground. The playground was just as much hers as Queenie’s and besides, she wanted to ask Miss Mack about that Double-Dutch tournament. It sounded interesting. And maybe Queenie wouldn’t even be there. Queenie was not only there; she and the gang were riding around the track on their bikes. When Sister tried to join in, all she got for her trouble was a cloud of dust and more of Queenie’s smart talk. “Well, if it isn’t Little Miss Hair Bow on her tricycle! Excuse our dust!” she shouted as she whizzed past. Excuse her dust indeed, thought Sister, getting an idea—I’ll show that Queenie McBear! She pedaled home as fast as she could. She hoped Brother Bear wasn’t out riding his big two-wheeler, because that was her idea: to borrow his bike, go back, and ride circles around that Queenie McBear. She managed to get on Brother’s bike by standing on a step—and she almost got it going. But her legs were a little too short, and after a few wobbly circles she crashed—ker-whomp! “Oh dear!” said Mama, who had just returned from a quick shopping tried to the mall and was watching from one of the tree-house window. She had a pretty good idea that Sister’s attempt to ride the two-wheeler had something to do with Queenie and the in-crowd. “I guess you had another run-in with that new cub,” she said as Sister came into the house. “Well, here’s a little something to cheer you up.” She reached into her shopping bag and took out some new clothes—some new and different clothes for Sister Bear. There were some very sharp jeans, a green-and-white striped designer top, and a bright green headband. “For me?” said Sister. “Of course,” said Mama. “Come on, now. Let’s try them on. You know,” she continued as she helped Sister out of her pink ruffled jumper and polka dot blouse and into her new outfit, “maybe these new things will change your luck.” “Maybe,” agreed Sister. But then she asked, “Mama, why did Queenie pick on me like that?” “Well,” said mama thoughtfully, “sometimes there are cubs, even grownups, who behave that way. They show off for the crowd by picking on someone who has a certain kind of name or wears a certain kind of clothes. They try to build themselves up by putting others down. That’s how in-crowds get started.” “But how about Anna, Millie, and Linda?” asked Sister. “They’ve always been my friends. Why did they side with Queenie?” “Maybe because they were glad Queenie wasn’t picking on them—and soft ice cream is soft ice cream—there!” she said, removing Sister’s pink hair bow and putting on her new headband. “You’re all set! Here, have a look at yourself in the big mirror.” “It’s very nice,” Sister said, “and I really appreciate the new thing. But there’s one problem: It’s just not me! I like me,” she said as she stepped down, “and I wouldn’t change me for a whole bunch of Queenie McBear. Then she took off her new outfit and put her old one back on, hair bow and all. “And she can keep her old in-crowd! Excuse me, Mama. I have to make a phone call.” She marched over to the phone and dialed a number. “Hello, Lizzy,” she said. “About that Double-Dutch tournament...” The Double-Dutch tournament had gotten to be a big thing. A lot of teams signed up. There were even some boy-cub teams. Brother Bear was on one, along with Cousin Fred and the Too-Tall gang. When Sister and Lizzy signed up, Anna, Millie, and Linda quit Queenie’s team and joined Sisters. Not only was Sister the best Double Dutcher in the neighborhood, but Anna and the others were getting a little tired of Queenie’s snooty ways. Sister Bear led her team in as fine an exhibition of Double-Dutch jumping as had ever been seen in Bear Country. It was no contest; her team won going away! Queenie’s team was a Double-Dutch disaster—especially Queenie, who made the mistake of wearing beads and big hoop earrings that caught in the rope and ended in a terrible tangle. After the prizes were awarded, the cubs all crowded around and congratulated Sister. They wanted her to teach them some of her Double-Dutch tricks. As they lined up for lessons, Lizzy called out to Queenie, “How about you?” “No thanks,” said Queenie with a little grin. “I’ve already learned my lesson.”

21. 1989 Too Much Vacation

“Well, that’s everything,” said Mama Bear as she and Sister and Brother Bear held the car trunk lid so that Papa Bear could tie it down. “Not quite,” said Papa, running back into the tree house. “We almost forgot the camera,” he said when he reappeared. “What good is a wonderful vacation without photographs to remember it by?” “Good thinking, Papa,” said Brother. “May I take some pictures when we get there?” “And how about me?” Sister wanted to know. “Of course you may,” said Papa as they bundled into the car. “We’re all going to take pictures of the most wonderful vacation the Bear family has ever had. All right, now—everybody buckle up and we’ll be on our way!” Four safety belts clicked into place and they left their safe, comfortable tree house and headed for the excitement and adventure of a vacation high up in the wilds of the Great Grizzly Mountains. It had been Papa’s idea to take their vacation in the Great Grizzlies. “It’ll be a real wilderness experience. We’ll live off the land. We’re getting too soft here in the valley with all our supermarkets and other conveniences.” “When he saw the ad in the news paper, there was no holding him. It said “Try a Wilderness Vacation! A lovely mountain cabin complete with a rowboat by beautiful Crystal Lake!” “Ah,” said Papa, painting beautiful word pictures, “to wake with the rising sun and catch our breakfast from a clear mountain lake!” “To bathe in its sparkling water! To snack on delicious wild berries as we tramp the mountain trails! To gaze at the beauty of a mountain sunset! Then, to sleep through the peace and quiet of a mountain night far from the noise of traffic and neighbors’ barking dogs!” It all sounded great to the cubs. “What kind of fish will we catch, Papa?” asked Brother. “Trout, no doubt,” he answered with supreme confidence. But Mama wasn’t so sure he would catch anything. So when she packed, she took along some canned goods in case the trout weren’t biting, and some books and games in case of a rainy day. “I can almost taste that fresh-caught trout,” said Brother as the road led ever higher into the mountain forest. “And I can almost taste those yummy wild berries,” said Sister. “And don’t forget my terrific wilderness stew!” said Papa as he turned onto an even steeper road. “But we didn’t bring things for stew,” objected Mama. “All we brought are some canned goods.” “Of course we didn’t,” laughed Papa. “I’m talking about my special live-off-the-land survival stew. It’s my secret recipe. I make it from bark, leaves, and roots that I find in the woods.” “When will we get there? asked the cubs. “Very soon. I can tell by the smell of that mountain air,” said Papa, taking a deep breath. “That’s not mountain air,” complained Brother, making a face. “That’s skunk!” “Hmmm,” said Papa, wrinkling his noise. A good time to start talking those pictures, thought Mama. “Pew!” said Papa. “Click!” said the camera. “There’s the cabin!” shouted Sister as they rounded a bend. And there it was indeed—a mountain cabin beside a lake, completed with rowboat. Of course, it wasn’t quite as they had pictured it from the ad. Crystal Lake looked more like mud soup. The lovely mountain cabin looked more like a tumble-down shack. There was a rowboat, all right, but it was half sunk in the lake. But Papa wasn’t the least bit discouraged He was more excited than ever. “It’s perfect!” he shouted. “The most perfect live-off-the-land vacation spot I’ve ever seen!” Mama wasn’t so sure. She noticed that there were no wires leading into the cabin, which meant there was electricity. “That’s the last thing we need,” scoffed Papa. “What you need on a live-off-the-land vacation smarts, and I’ve got enough of those for all of us.” He took a cooking pot and a folding chair from the car trunk. “Here,” he said, making a seat for Mama. “This is a vacation. You relax while I gather the fixings for my fabulous wilderness stew. And you two tidy up the cabin,” he called to the cubs as he headed into the forest with the cooking pot. But Mama didn’t expect to do much relaxing on this vacation, and she wasn’t surprised to find that the cabin was an even worse mess inside than it was outside. There was an ankle-deep carpet of twigs, branches, and dead leaves on the floor, and it was practically a museum of spider webs, cocoons, and mouse nests. Time for another picture, thought Mama. Scurry, scurry went the mice. Click went the camera. “What’s this?” asked Sister as she cleaned leaves out of the sink. “That’s a hand pump for water,” answered Mama. “Just what I need!” It was Papa, back with his cooking pot full of strange-looking bark, eaves, and roots. “A little water for my stew!” He worked the handle. The pup gurgled and squeaked and after a while began to squirt water—rusty brown water. But he wasn’t discouraged. “Just what I need for my stew,” he said cheerfully, “ready-made gravy!” He carried the pot outside, where he had prepared a cooking fire. It was very exciting for the cubs. But Mama wasn’t so sure. So she made a fire in the fireplace and warmed up a supper of canned beans and dried honeycomb. When Papa cried, “Stew time!” the cubs ran out for a first taste. Mama followed with the camera. “Here’s to living off the land!” said Papa, holding up a big spoon of the strange-looking stuff. Then he, Brother, and Sister each took a taste. “Yugh!” said Sister. “Blech!” said Brother. “P-tooey!” said Papa. “Click!” said the camera. Mama Bear’s supper of beans and honeycomb proved very tasty. Papa Bear stretched and yawned. “Now, early to bed so I can get up with the sun and catch our breakfast.” The sun did rise and it was very beautiful, but Papa snored right through it. The frogs, crickets, and owls had made such a racket during the night that he hadn’t fallen asleep until just before the rising sun lit up the sky. Papa began to get a little discourage when he went out to catch breakfast. The boat sank as soon as he stepped into it, and all he caught was a gloppy mudsucker that made snuffling noises and stared. “Snuffle, snuffle, glop,” said the mudsucker. “Click!” said the camera. It was Papa’s turn to snap the picture when Mama and the cubs tasted the wild berries. The thorns were something fierce and the berries were so sour even the birds puckered. Later, there was a perfectly beautiful sunset. But the Bear family didn’t get to see much of it. They were too busy swatting the swarms of hungry mountain mosquitoes that swooped in from the lake. “Live off the land, you say!” shouted Mama as they ran for the cabin. “With all these thorns and mosquitoes it’s more like the land is living off us!” It began to rain just as they reach the cabin. But the roof leaked badly, and pretty soon they had more leaks than they had pots and pans. They spent a miserable night. By morning, they were soaked to their fur and there was a foot of water in the front stairwell. “Don’t worry,” said Papa. “The rain can’t last forever, and just as soon as seep out this water...” But instead of Papa sweeping the water, the water sept Papa—out the door, down the muddy slope, and into the muddy, mucky lake. When Mama and the cubs reached him, he looked more like a mud ball than Papa Bear. “Say,” he said, looking at them. “I have a terrific idea—let’s go home.” So the Bear family loaded the trunk, put the car top up, bundled into the car, and bumped and splashed down the mountain in the driving rain. The rain had stopped and the sun had come out by the time they reached the valley, and their tree house had never looked so good to them as it did that day. The next day, Mama took the film to the camera store to be developed. When the pictures came back a few days later, the Bear family wrote titles on them. They began to chuckle as they passed the pictures around. The chuckles grew to roaring laughter, and soon they were laughing so hard they cried. And every so often, though the years, they take out those pictures and have an absolutely wonderful time enjoying the worst vacation the Bear family ever had.

WHOOO! WHOO RIBIT WHOO RIBIT RIBIT RIBIT WHOO RIBIT HOOT RIBIT RIBIT RIBIT CLICK CLICK CLICK WHOO RIBIT WHOO WHOOO CLICK CLICK CLICK Papa smells the mountain air we are greeted upon our arrival We taste Papa’s Wilderness Stew Our first taste of wild mountain berries Papa catches our breakfast Papa decides it’s time to go home

22. 1990 The Slumber Party

One of the most interesting things about a telephone is that when it rings you don’t know who’s calling until you answer it. Sometimes when the phone rang in the Bears’ tree house, it was for Papa. Papa Bear is a furniture maker, and customers often call about buying a table or chair. Sometimes it was Grizzly Gran calling Mama about getting together for a visit. When the call was for Brother Bear, it was usually Cousin Freddy with a question about homework. When it was for Sister Bear, it was almost always her best friend, Lizzy Bruin. And Lizzy almost always had some big idea: a tea party for all their stuffed animals, going to the attic and dressing up in grownup’s clothes, or organizing a sorority and using Famer Ben’s old chicken coop as a clubhouse—with permission, of course. But today Lizzy was calling with her best idea yet. “A slumber party? Tonight at your house? Great idea!” said Sister. “Just a few of my dearest friends,” Lizzy continued. “You, of course, and Anna, Millie, and Queenie. Bring your sleeping bag—and would you bring your tape player? Anna and Millie are bringing tapes—and Queenie’s going to teach us the latest dance steps.” “I don’t know,” Mama Bear said later. “You’ve never slept away from home before.” “Oh, but I have,” protested Sister. “At Grizzly Gramps and Gran’s—one time for a whole week!” “That’s different,” said Mama. “Gramps and Gran are family—close family. “The Bruins are neighbors,” argued Siter. “Close neighbors. Oh please, Mama. It’ll be such fun. I’m taking my player. Anna and Millie have great tapes—and Queenie is going to teach us the latest dance steps. Please, Mama.” “Oh, I suppose it’s all right,” sighed Mama. “Come on, let’s start getting you organized for this slumber party.” “You know,” she said as she checked out Sister’s sleeping bag—it still has some leaves stuck to it from a family sleepout—“sleeping over at a friend’s house is a kind of special privilege. And something that goes with privilege is responsibility. Do you know what those words mean? “Sure,” said Sister. “Privilege mean being allowed to do stuff, and responsibility means not messing up.” “Now, you remember what your mama told you about privilege and responsibility,” said Papa Bear as Sister started off for Lizzy Bruin’s. “Oh, I will, Papa! I will!” she said. “You know,” she said as she checked out Sister’s sleeping bag—it still had some leaves stuck to it from a family sleepout—“sleeping over at a friend’s house is a kind of special privilege. And something that goes with privilege is responsibility. Do you know what those words mean?” “Sure,” said Sister. “Privilege means being allowed to do stuff, and responsibility means not messing up.” “Now, you remember what your mama told you about privilege and responsibility,” said Papa Bear as Sister started off for Lizzy Bruin’s. “Oh, I will, Papa! I will!” she said. But Sister wasn’t very far along the road to Lizzy’s before she began thinking about all the fun and excitement she was going to have at the party. It didn’t take long for those thoughts to push Mama’s advice about privilege and responsibility clear out of her head. Another interesting thing about telephones is that they help news to travel fast—especially news about parties. Anna told her other friends about the slumber party, and they told their friends. Millie did the same Pretty soon cubs from all over the neighborhood were calling Lizzy and asking if they could come to the party. “Sure,” she said. “But bring some popcorn or soda—we don’t want to run out.” Too-Tall Grizzly didn’t hear about the party by phone. He heard about it when he and his gang went to show Queenie his new boom box. “Hmm, a slumber party,” he said to his pals. “Sounds like fun.” “How are we gonna get invited to a girls’ party?” asked one of them. “We’re not gonna get invited, stupid,” said Too-Tall. “We’re gonna crash—boom box and all!” Later, when the rest of the Bear family had settled down for a quiet evening at home, Mama Bear sighed and said, “I’m sure she’ll be all right.” “Of course she will,” said Papa Bear, looking up from a magazine. “After all,” Mama said, “Sister is a well-behaved little cub, and Mr. and Mrs. Bruin have a lovely, well-run home and are responsible, careful parents.” “No doubt about it,” said Papa, going back to his reading. There was only one problem: Mr. and Mrs. Bruin weren’t home! They had gone out for the evening and had left Lizzy in the care of a teenage sitter who wasn’t much older than some of Lizzy’s guests. The Bruins hadn’t planned on a slumber party when Lizzy had asked if a few friends could sleep over. And they certainly hadn’t planned on a rip-roaring, earsplitting, popcorn-throwing, soda-squirting party for half the cubs in the neighborhood. Because that’s what was happening—with Sister right in the thick of it. The only thing that wasn’t happening at the slumber party was slumber. Lizzy’s sitter tried to keep things under control, but she couldn’t even make herself heard over the noise. You never heard such a commotion! Some neighbors up the road had never heard such a commotion, either. They called the police. The chief sent Officer Marguerite to investigate. She reached the Bruins’ house at the same time Mr. and Mrs. Bruin were returning home. Well, things calmed down pretty quickly after that. The party was canceled, parents were called, Lizzy was sent to bed—and an angry and disappointed Mama Bear came to take Sister home. “I’m angry and disappointed,” said Mama Bear as they walked home through the night. “After all the things I said about privilege and responsibility!” Sister was grounded and sent to bed—doubly grounded, which meant she had to stay in her room for a day and in the house for a week. “A pretty harsh punishment,” commented Papa Bear a little later. “Not harsh at all,” said Mama. “You should have seen the Bruins’ living room: popcorn stuck to everything, soda all over the place, lamps knocked over—an absolute disgrace! And after all I said about privilege and responsibility!” “Sister does have to share the blame,” said Papa. “But she didn’t do it all by herself. It was one of those situations where one thing leads to another and things get out of control. But you know, my dear, privilege and responsibility aren’t just for cubs. They’re for parents, too.” “Cushions all strewn about—" said Mama. “It’s a privilege to have cubs—and with privilege goes responsibility,” continued Papa. “So we’re partly to blame too. When Lizzy invited Sister to the slumber party, it was our responsibility to call the Bruins. If we had, we’d have found out that they were going to be out for the evening, and the whole thing would have been nipped in the bud.” “Hmm,” said Mama thoughtfully. The next morning she canceled the grounding and took Sister over to the Bruin’ to help clean up. Anna, Millie, and Queenie had come to help too. “I know what!” said Lizzy, as full of ideas as ever. “Let’s make this a clean-up party!” “Let’s not,” said Sister. “And if you don’t mind, Liz, I don’t want to hear the word party again for a long time.”

Yes, I think I can handle that. How soon will you need it? This weekend? That’ll be fine, Gran. The fifth problem? I got 6 ½. What did you get? For you, Sister. It’s Lizzy. It’s OK with me, but I think I should warn you...

PEE-YOO! DINO SET CHIEF

23. 1991 Don’t pollute anymore

“Well, look here!” said Papa Bear as he opened the Evening News. “Your friend Professor Actual Factual’s got his picture in the paper!” “Oh?” said Brother and Sister Bear, coming to see. “There’s a big story, too,” said Papa, “and a headline.” “My goodness,” aid Mama bear. “What’s it about?” “’Leading scientist claims Bear Country is in serious trouble,’” he said, reading the headline. “What sort of trouble?” asked Sister. Papa, who was reading the story to himself, didn’t answer. “What sort of trouble?” said Mama, repeating Sister’s question. “Oh, you know how professors are,” he said. “Actual Factual’s making big fuss about pollution.” “Well, I know how Professor Actual Factual is,” said Mama, “and I think he’s quite sensible.” “So do I,” said Sister. “Me too,” agreed Brother. “Oh, he’s a great guy, all right,” said Papa. “He’s dug up some terrific dinosaur bones, and he runs a great museum. But I happen to think he’s gone a little overboard on his pollution thing. I’m as much against pollution as the next fellow,” he continued. “I just don’t think a couple of candy wrappers and drinking cups along the side of the road is the end of the world.” “Besides, Bear Country is in great shape. Come on, I’ll show you.” He opened the door and led the family out onto the front stoop. “You see? Bear Country is not only in good shape, it’s downright beautiful: the rolling hills, the forest, the lakes and streams—and just look at that sunset. “It’s beautiful, all right,” agreed Brother. “But our science book says that some of those colors are caused by chemicals in the air that shouldn’t be there.” “Piffle!” said Papa. “Say, aren’t you two supposed to be doing homework?” Sister, who had just about completed her homework, finished quickly. But Brother Bear was stuck. Teacher Bob had asked him to do a report on endangered species. The books he had taken out of the school library weren’t very helpful. Of course, the kind of shape Bear Country was in wasn’t as simple as Papa made it seem. How Bear Country looked depended on your point of view. It looked fine from the Bear family’s front stoop. It looked even better if you had a bird’s-eye view while flying high above the earth. But if you had a squirrel’s-eye view and were finding fewer and fewer acorns because too many trees were being cut down. Bear Country didn’t look so fine. If you had a duck’s-eye view, you might think the professor was right about pollution. And if you had a fish’s-eye view, you might think things were downright awful! The next day Brother decided to visit the museum to ask Professor Actual Factual for help with his endangered species report. Sister Bear went with him. Professor Actual Factual was usually cheerful and friendly and bubbling over with ideas and projects when the cubs visited, but this time he looked worried and glum. He cheered up a bit when he saw them, but when Brother told him the purpose of the visit—to get help on a report about endangered species—he said something very surprising. “I’ll tell you the endangered species to do your report on—US!” “We don’t understand,” they said. “It’s very simple,” explained the professor. “We bears and all other creatures need certain things to survive: clean air to breathe, pure water drink, and good soil to grow food in. If we don’t do something about pollution, we’re all going to become endangered species. “Come,” he said, “you’ll understand soon enough.” He led them out to where the Actual-Factualmobile was parked. It was a special van with all kinds of scientific gear in it. Then the professor took Brother and Sister on a Bear Country tour they wouldn’t soon forget. They went past Grizzly Gus’s Garage, where they saw oil leaking into a stream, getting on a duck, and killing some fish. They went past the old box factory, where they saw ugly black smoke pouring into the air. They scuba-dived into Great Bear Lake, where they saw everything from soda cans to rusty old bedsprings—and worse! They saw a fish tangled in a plastic soda-can holder! They cut it loose, but they couldn’t rescue all the fish from all the plastic holders carelessly thrown away. They drove through the forest and saw that a great many trees had been cut down, and that not many new trees had been planted to replace them. “You might speak to your dad about that,” said the professor. “He and his fellow woodsbears could help with that problem.” “I think I see what you mean about becoming an endangered species,” said Brother when they got back to the museum. “Yes,” agreed Sister, “but what are we going to do about it?” “Did that Evening News story do much good? asked Brother. “Not much,” said the professor. “The idea that Bear Country is in serious trouble because of pollution seems to be hard to get across.” “To grownups, maybe,” said Sister. “But we understand, and all our cub friends will, too. Because we’re the ones who’ll have to live on a messed-up, polluted earth when we grow up!” “Professor,” said Brother, “how does this sound? You come to our school and explain all about pollution to the cubs of Bear Country. Maybe we can do something about it!” Actual Factual was impressed. “I’ll give Teacher Bob a call right away and arrange it,” he said. And that’s what happened. The cubs were all eyes and ears as Actual Factual told them about the trouble Bear Country was getting into. First, he taught them three important new words: ecology, conversation, and recycle. The way the professor explained it, ecology means how all the creatures, the plants, and the earth itself work together. Conservation means not wasting the valuable things of the earth—like water, oil, wood, and metal. And recycle means finding was to use some of those valuable things over and over. The cubs learned quite a lot from Actual Factual, and they had some ideas of their own, too. “How about a recycling program suggested one cub. “Maybe for newspapers to start,” added another, “then, if it works—for cans and bottles, too.” Tim Honeypot said he’d talk to his dad Mayor Honeypot, about it. Brother Bear remembered Grizzly Gus’s Garage. “You shouldn’t be allowed to spill oil onto streams and kill fish,” he said. Babs Bruno, whose dad was the chief of police, said, “I’ll talk to my dad. It there isn’t a law against it, there ought to be.” Even Too-Tall helped with an idea. “My uncle owns the Super-Duper Market. He could put in a bag-return plan for reusing bags.” “Excellent suggestion,” said the professor. “And if some folks don’t wanna cooperate,” added Too-Tall,” me and the gang can lean on’em a little.” “The bag-return is fine, Too-Tall,” said Teacher Bob, “but no learning!” That evening Brother and Sister told Mama and Papa about the Earthsavers Club and all the plans for stopping pollution. Mama was very impressed. Papa was too. “As I said before, I’m just as much against pollution as the next fellow!” But when the cubs asked him to be sure that he and his fellow woodsbears plant a new tree for every one they cut down, he got a little grumpy. “Humph!” he grumped. “It’s hard enough to cut trees down without having to plant them as well. Besides, what’s all the fuss about? They’re just trees!” “My dear,” said Mama, “the cub are right. The forest is a living thing and deserves respect.” Papa was about to say “Piffle!” but thought better of it. The problem of conserving the forest must have been on his mind, because that night he had a dream. In the dream he was walking toward the forest to cut wood—when the trees began to sway and wave their branches! Then the branchers turned into reaching, grasping arms. Then the trees climbed out of the earth on their roots and chased him. “Help!” cried terrified Papa in his sleep. “The trees! They’re after me!” He woke up in a cold sweat. “Having a nightmare?” asked Mama. “Er—it must have been something I ate,” he said. “Or something you heard, perhaps?” she said. “About trees?” “Piffle!” he said, and turned over to try to go back to sleep. But it wasn’t going to be easy. The cubs didn’t expect to solve all of Bear Country’s pollution problem, but the Earthsavers Club made a very good start. The mayor declared a special holiday called Earthsavers Day, and the cubs had a big parade. Brother and Sister Bear marched at the head with Professor Actual Factual. There were may grownups in the parade, too, including Papa Bear, who carried a sign that did not say “Piffle.”

PENUTS CANDY Leading Scientist Claims Bear Country is in Serious Trouble BEARS ONION INSTITUTION ACTUAL-FACTUALMOBILE ACTUAL-FACTUALMOBILE ecology conservation recycle GAG RETURN DON’T POLLUTE EARTHSAVERS CLUB EVERY LITTER BIT HURTS! 88 RECYCLE SAVE THE EARTH EARTHSAVRS CLUB HELP SAVE TREE BE A SUER-DUPER BAG RETURNERS (OR ELSE!) RECYCLE NOW! POLLTION’S A FACT, SO CLEAN UP YOUR ACT! BE AWARE BE A CONSERVATION BEAR! EVERY LITTER BIT HURTS! CUBS FOR CLEAN LAKES & STEAMS A GOOD WOODSBEEAR PLANTS A TEE FOR EVERY SINGLE ONE HE CUTS, NO IF, NO ANDS, NO MAYBES, OR BUTS!

24. 1992 TOO MUCH PRESSURE

If someone were to ask you who Bear Country’s busiest creatures are, you might answer that bees are the busiest. They gather nectar and pollen, make honey, guard the hive, and do all the other things that have earned them the title Busy Bees. Or you might answer that beavers are the busiest. They fell trees, make dams, and build lodges with secret underwater entrances. There’s no question about it, beavers certainly are busy. But if you were to answer bees or beavers, you would be wrong. Because the busiest creatures in Bear Country, lately, are none other than our friends the Bear family. The Bears haven’t aways been so busy. They used to do the things that most families do: they worked and played, went to school, visited friends, enjoyed nature—and once in a while they just sat around and did absolutely nothing. The Bears hadn’t planned on becoming so busy—it sort of sneaked up on them. First, there was Brother Bear and the Little League. Then, Sister Bear got bitten by the ballet bug and started ballet class. When her best friend, Lizzy Bruin, started riding lessons, Sister just had to take that up too—and Brother wasn’t about to be left out of something as exciting as horseback riding. That’s how it was with other activities. As soon as one of the cubs’ friends signed up for something, Brother and Sister had to sign up too. Before anyone thought to say enough is enough, they were also signed up for...Talk about busy! Mama or Papa Bear had to drive Brother and Sister to all those activities! Things got so complicate that Mama had to make a big schedule to keep things straight. Papa hug it on the wall. The schedule was especially difficult on Friday—and today was Friday. “Will somebody answer the phone?” called Mama, after the fourth ring. “I’m busy getting things out of the freezer for tonight’s dinner.” “Can’t right now!” shouted Sister from upstairs. “I’m getting ready for ballet!” “Me neither!” yelled Brother. “I’m getting on my baseball stuff!” Since Papa was out working on the car, Mama had to answer the phone. She reached it by the seventh right. It seemed a lot longer to Gran on the other end. “Hello?” said Mama. “Hello, dear,” said Gran. “Is everything all right? You sound a little breathless. “Just a little,” said Mama. “I was in the kitchen getting dinner out of the freezer. The cubs are upstairs getting dressed for ballet and baseball, and Papa—" But before she could explain about Papa, her shoulder bag got tangled in the phone cord, which pulled the phone down with a clunk. “What happened?” shouted Gran. “There was an awful clunk!” “It was just the phone falling—was there anything special, Gran?” What Mama didn’t explain was that when she stooped to pick up the phone, her hat fell off, and when she reached for it, she tripped over the cord and was now sitting in a tangled heap on the floor. “I was just calling to invite you all to dinner sometime soon,” said Gran. “Love to, Gran. But we’re just on our way out, so let me check our schedule and get back to you.” “Fine,” Gran said after a pause. “Well, g’bye.” “Mama!” said Sister. “What are you doing sitting on the floor playing with the phone cord? C’mon, we’re going to be late!” “Drop me off first!” shouted Brother on the way to the car. “No! Me first!” cried Sister. “No, me!” insisted Brother. When Papa tried to explain what had been wrong with the car—the spark plugs needed cleaning—Mama shouted, “Not now, dear!” and roared off, leaving him in a cloud of dust. “Well,” Gran said as she hung up the phone, “there certainly is a lot going on over at the tree house.” “That’s the way young folks are,” said Gramps. “They like to get out and do things. Why, when I was a young feller—“ “Doing is one thing,” said Gran. “Overdoing,” she added with a sigh, “is something else again.” If Papa could have heard Gran, he surely would have agreed. There was too much going on—too much coming and going, too much rushing about, too much pressure. The Bear family’s schedule was becoming a nightmare—as it turned out, a whole series of nightmares. The cubs had planned to watch some TV that evening, but they were so still and tried—Sister from ballet, Brother from baseball—that they went to bed early, fell asleep, and dreamed. Sister dreamed she was on a strange sort of merry-go-round—a merry-go-round of activities, which went round and round and round. She wanted to get off, but no matter how hard she tried, she couldn’t. Brother had a dream too. He dreamed he was caught up in an enormous whirlwind of baseballs, soccer balls, and computers. Papa dreamed he was trapped on a magic carpet that was zooming into a deep black home. Only it wasn’t a magic carpet. It was that awful schedule from the wall. Mama didn’t have a nightmare. The reason was that she didn’t fall asleep all night. She lay awake staring into the darkness, wondering how she was going to get through the next day. After a quick breakfast, Mama packed a lunch for Papa, who headed for some work in the forest. Then she shooed the cubs into the car. “Hurry!” she said. “We have a difficult day ahead of us. There’s art class, soccer, karate, and swimming, and we’ve got to squeeze in lunch and shopping!” They climbed into the car, ad she turned the key. But the engine wouldn’t start. She tried again, but it still wouldn’t start. “Please, Mama!” shouted Brother. “Our karate instructor is very strict about being late!” “And the soccer coach is worse!” yelled Sister. Mama tried again and again. “Please, Mama!” they screamed, jumping up and down in the back seat. But no matter how hard she tried, the car just wouldn’t start. Then Mama did something the cubs had never seen her do before. She started to cry. Big wet tears rolled down her cheeks. The cubs forgot karate and soccer and everything else except that their mama was crying. “What’s the matter?” asked Brother. “Tell us, please!” begged Sister. But Mama just went boohooing up the front steps and into the house. “Go get Papa!” Sister said to Brother. “I’ll stay with Mama.” Sister followed Mama up to her room, where she fell on the bed sobbing. It was all Sister could do to keep from crying herself. “ “It’s Mama!” You gotta come,” shouted Brother as he reached Papa’s workplace in the wood. He told Papa what happened. Papa could see that he was upset about Mama crying. “Everybody cries once in a while, Son,” he said. “Even you?” asked Brother. “Sometimes,” Papa said. “The problem with the car is those spark plugs. We probably need new ones. But the real problem is that schedule of ours. I know Mama didn’t sleep well last night worrying about it.” “I didn’t sleep too well, either. I had this awful dream,” admitted Brother. “That makes two of us,” said Papa. “Sister had one too,” said Brother as they reached tree house. “Mama stopped crying!” announce Sister as Papa and Brother came upstairs. “That’s right,” Mama said, smiling through a few last tears. “There’s nothing like a good cry sometimes.” “And there’s nothing like a little common sense about too much pressure,” said Papa. So the bears had a family meeting right then and there. The cubs agreed that two after-school activities a week were more than enough. Brother chose baseball and computer club. Sister chose ballet and horseback riding. True—they lost their title The Busiest Family in Bear Country. But they went back to having a very good time doing the everyday things that most families do. They worked and played, went to school, visited friends, enjoyed nature—and once in a while, they sat around doing absolutely nothing.

swimming, gymnastics, soccer, karate, art, and computer club SOCCER IS HOW WE GET OUR KICKS! I CALL IT “FLOWER WITH DRIPS” SCHEDULE SUN MON TUES WED THUR FRI SAT sun. sch. sun. sch. art clb. sun. sch. comput clb. woods-bears clb swim cls. earth clb. riding quilts Riding stamp club riding karate soccer music lssns soccer council mtg dent (B&S) (M&P.) Fund Dr. stamp club GMN PTA B. Ball Ballet Art soccer karate swim

25. 1994 Trouble with Money

Brother Bear and Sister Bear knew quite a lot about the ways of Bear Country. They knew where the most beautiful wild flowers grew. They knew where the wild berries were the thickest and juiciest. They knew the best spot for watching sunrises and sunsets. They knew where all the best honey trees were. They even knew a very special place where you could almost always see a rainbow—from a secret space behand the waterfall. But there were somethings they didn’t know very much about. One of the things Brother and Sister Bear didn’t understand very well was money. Oh, they knew money was fun to have and even more fun to spend. And whenever they got some—as a present, or for doing a chore for a neighbor, or for no reason at all from Grizzly Gramps, who tended to spoil them, or from Papa Bear, who spoiled them even more—they ran as fast as their legs could carry them to the Bear Country Mall and spent it...they ran as fast as their legs could carry them to the Bear Country Mall and spent it...for honeycomb on a stick, a balsawood glider that did loops, a tiny little mouth organ that only played three notes. They never bought anything sensible, and they hardly ever saved. Once in a while Sister put money in her piggy bank. But she usually shook it out again before it had a chance to cool off her hot little hand. Brother didn’t even have a piggy bank. Mama was becoming concerned about the cub’s carefree, spendthrift was with money. “I think Brother and Siter should have a regular allowance,” she said one evening when she and Papa were working on the family books. “An allowance!” said Papa. “Yes, so they can learn to use money sensibly—to save, to plan ahead.” “Oh, no!” said Papa. “They’re much too young for that sort of thing. Let them enjoy themselves! They’ll have to worry about money soon enough when they’re grownups,” he added with a sigh. But it was Papa who first lost patience with their carelessness about money. It happened one day when the cubs had been at a mall spending some pennies a neighbor had given the for walking her dog. That was when they saw the new video game. It was called Astro Bear and it looked very exciting. “A video game! At the mall!” Papa shouted. “You must think I’m made of money!” The cubs thought no such thing, and when they pictured it, it seemed very strange. Mama could see that they were puzzled and she explained: “’Made of money’ is just a figure of speech, my dears.” That’s when the cubs realized that the situation was serious. Because Papa Bear only used figures of speech when he was upset. “You must think money grows on trees!” he shouted. Another figure of speech. “Video games, indeed!” he continued, becoming more and more upset. “There was no such thing as video games when I was a cub! Why, I didn’t know what money was until I was almost grown!” “Precisely, my dear,” interrupted Mama. “And that’s why this might be a very good time to start Brother and Sister on a regular allowance, so they can—" “Absolutely not!” roared Papa, knocking over a chair. “They must earn their money! That’s what life is about—working earning money, saving fora rainy day.” The cubs knew how really serious the situation must be. Papa had used three figures of speech and knocked over a chair. They decided right then and there to mend their careless, spendthrift ways. It turned out that the cubs were very good at earning money once they set their minds to it. First they gathered wild flowers from those special places they knew about. Then they made them into bouquets and sold them by the side of the road. Business was very good. They gathered those fat, juicy wild berries and sold them door-to-door. Brother and Sister were turning out to be even better at making money than they had been at spending it. They organized guided tours of Bear Country’s finest beauty spots. They started a very successful pet-minding service. Brother had to borrow Mama’s sugar bowl to keep the extra money in. At first Papa was very impressed and pleased. But when the cubs started to sell maps showing the locations of all the best honey trees, Papa began to have doubts. “Those honey trees are a family secret,” he complained. “The cubs don’t seem to understand that some things are more important than money.” “They’ve gone from caring too little about money to caring too much. Why, just look at them! They’re turning into greedy, selfish, little misers right before our eyes!” he continued. He pointed at the cubs, who did, indeed, look like misers greedily counting their money. “Cubs,” said Papa in his sternest voice, “we’re going to have another talk.” But before he could start his speech, the cubs took all the money they had earned selling flowers and berries, doing chores, minding pets, and selling honey-tree maps and dumped it on his lab. “Here, Papa!” said Brother. “This is for you!” “That’s right,” said Sister. “We thought if we made some money for you, you wouldn’t have to worry about it so much. We hope it’s enough.” Papa was so startled, and so embarrassed at having been so wrong about them, that he was speechless. “That’s very generous!” said Mama. “It’s quite a sum of money and I know Papa appreciates it. But I have what may be a better idea. Papa does worry about money, of course. Most mamas and papas do from time to time. But what Papa is really worried about is you. He wants to be sure you understand that there's more to know about money than how to spend it.” “You know what I think?” said Papa. “I think we should start Brother and Sister on a regular allowance so they can learn to use money sensibly—to save, to plan ahead.” “An excellent idea!” said mama, smiling. “What about the money we earned?” asked the cubs. “You earned it, and it’s yours,” said Mama. “What I suggest is that we take it down to the mall and put it in the Bear Country Bank.” “Good suggestion,” said Papa. “That money can be your ‘nest egg.’” “Oh, dear!” cried the cubs together. “Another figure of speech!” “And a very appropriate one,” said Mama. She explained that the ‘nest egg’ is the one the farmer leaves in the nest to hatch another chick. “When you put money in the bank, it ‘hatches’ interest.” “Interest?” asked the cubs, puzzled. “The bank will pay you for leaving your money there. That’s called ‘interest.’” That day the Bear family went to the bank and opened an account for the cubs. It happened that the bank was right next to the video arcade. “Say, that looks interesting,” said Papa when he saw the Astro Bear game. “Let’s give it a try!” So the Bear family gave Astro Bear a try. Papa ended up with the lowest score. “You know,” he said, “we didn’t have video games when I was a cub. Will you give me another chance at this sometime?” “Any time at all!” said Brother and Sister, giving their papa a great big hug.

HONEY CAKES 15 cents For You BEAR GOODS GIFTS BEAR COUNTRY MALL ARCADE ASTRO BEAR WILD FLOWERS 10 cents bu PET MINDING 10 cent AN HOUR HONEY TREE MAP 15 cents ARCADE ARCADE ASTRO BEAR BANKBOOK BANKBOOK ASTRO BEAR

26. 1994 The Bully

One day, Mama, Papa, and Brother Bear were busy in the yard when Sister Bear came home crying. Her face was scratched and dirty, and her clothes were torn. “What happened to you?” asked Mama. “Please tell us,” said Papa. Brother couldn’t believe how beat-up Sister looked. Her jumper and blouse were turn. Her face and fur were a mess. Even her pink bow was drooping. “Did you fall?” asked Mama. Sister shook her head no. “Was there an accident?” asked Papa. Once again she shook her head no. “I think I can tell you what happened,” said Brother. “It looks to me like somebody beat her up.” “Beat her up? That’s outrageous!” said Papa. “Who in the world would beat up a sweet little cub like Sister?” asked Mama. “A bully might,” said Brother. That’s when Sister stopped crying long enough to get some words out. “B-B-Brother’s right,” she sobbed. “A no-good nasty rotten bully beat me up—and for no reason!” Just the thought of it made her so angry that she started to cry all over again. Mama and Papa helped Sister up the steps and into the house. After a drink of water, she calmed down enough to tell them what had happened. “Lizzy, Queenie, and I were playing tag at the playground when this new cub—a no-good bully named Tuffy—stuck out a foot and tripped me. So I got up and said, “Why don’t you watch where you put your fee?” Before I knew what was happening, it was POW, BAM, WHAMMO, and I was flat on my back with this Tuffy character sitting on my chest rubbing dirt in my face.” “Outrageous!” roared Papa. “Where’s my hat? I’m going over to that playground and—" Mama pulled Papa aside. “You’re going to do no such thing,” she said. “But something has to be done,” Papa said. “Indeed, it does,” agreed Mama. “But right now we have to take care of Sister.” She turned to call, “Brother! Would you please get me a wet washclo—Where’s Brother?” “Don’t know,” said Sister. “He was here one minute, and the next minute he was gone.” Lizzy and Queenie were still at the playground when Brother got there. “I’ve got a knuckle sandwich for some bully named Tuffy,” he said. “Where is he?” “Brother,” said Lizzy, “I think there’s something you ought to—“ “Never mind the small talk,” he growled. “Just point him out and get out of the way!” Lizzy shrugged and pointed to the small building that housed the Boy’s Room and the Girls’ Room. But there was no one there. No one, that is, but a little girl who was coming out of the Girls’ Room. But hold everything! The little girl was wearing a T-shirt that said Tuffy! “You’re Tuffy?” said Brother. “Yeah,” she said. “Wanna make somethin’ out of it?” “But—but you’re a girl!” said Brother. “What did you expect me to be—an eggplant?” said Tuffy. Brother Bear was shocked right down to his very bones. This big bully he was going to clean up the playground with was not only a girl, but a little girl at that. Maybe even a bit smaller than Sister. When Lizzy and Queenie came over to watch, Tuffy figure out who Brother was. “Hey! said she. “You must be the big brother of Little Miss Pink hairbow! She got fresh, so I cleaned her clock. Wanna make somethin’ out of it?” That was exactly what Brother wanted to do. But there was no way he could hit a girl. If he did, then he’d be the bully. It was all he could do to turn away and leave. “Chicken! Just like your sister!” yelled Tuffy. Brother headed home, hands in pockets, staring at the ground. Something had to be done! But what? As he passed the school, Brother got an idea. But he would have to hurry. It was Friday afternoon, and the school would be closing for the weekend. He hoped Mr. Grizzmeyer, the gym teacher, hadn’t left yet. When Brother got home, he was carrying something in a big bag. Instead of going in the front door, he quietly opened the side hatch and dropped the bag into the cellar. Then he closed the hatch and rejoined the family by going in the front door. “Where have you been?” asked Mama. “We’ve been having a family meeting.” “Er—I was just checking out the playground,” Brother said. “And no doubt you found out that Tuffy is a girl,” said Mama. “We’ve been discussing the situation and have pretty much decided that the best thing for Sister to do is simply to avoid his awful Tuffy person. Then, too, you’ll be at school, and you can keep an eye on Sister. What do you think of the plan? “It’s okay,” said Brother. “But Sister’s the one that got beat up. What does she think?” “It’s okay, I guess,” said Sister. “But what I’d really like to do is punch that Tuffy’s nose right through her face, then kick her in the shin, then knock her down and—” “Now, Sister,” said Mama, “we’ve been through all that.” Good! thought Brother. Sister and I are on the same wavelength. Before dinner, Brother passed Sister a note. It said, Important! Meet me in the cellar at seven o’clock.” The first thing Sister saw when she showed up for the secret meeting was one of Mama’s big bags of dried beans sitting on a stool. There was a drawing of a face marked Tuffy taped to it, and Brother was standing beside it holding the bag he had gotten at school. He also had a book. “What’s this all about?” asked Sister. “It’s about that Tuffy character, and you not getting beat up again,” Brother said. “Sounds good so far,” said Sister. “Mama’s bag of beans is a punching bag,” Brother said. “A punching bag named Tuffy,” said Sister. “Perfect!” She gave the beans a pretty good punch. “Not bad,” said Brother. “What’s in the other bag?” Sister asked. “Boxing gloves,” Brother said. “And this book is called The Art of Self-Defense.” “Where did you get all this stuff?” asked Sister. “From Mr. Grizzmeyer. I told him I had a friend who was having trouble with a bully. We’ve got it just for the weekend. It goes back Monday morning.” “Then what are we waiting for?” Sister said. “LET’S GET STARTED!” Sister turned out to be a good student of the art of self-defense. With Brother’s help, she learned—the left jab, the right cross, the left hook, and the upper cut. She also learned to duck. And she punched Mama’s dried beans silly. “Well, you learned quite a lot over the weekend,” Brother said on Monday morning. “But there’s something very important for you to remember: You still have to avoid Tuffy! She’s a mean little thing. She was even ready to take me on!” “Don’t worry,” said Sister. “I can still feel where she socked me on the jaw.” Sister did a good job of avoiding Tuffy. She avoided her all day Monday and all day Tuesday. But at recess on Wednesday, Tuffy did something so mean and nasty that Sister just had to do something. Tuffy was throwing stones at a baby bird that couldn’t fly yet! “Stop that, you bully!” shouted Sister. “You’ll hurt that baby bird!” “Well, if it isn’t Little Miss Pink Hairbow!” said Tuffy. “You know somethin’? I’d much rather hurt you!” She rushed at Sister with her hard little fists ready. But Sister was ready, too. She had her left out and her right up, protecting her jaw. When Tuffy threw a hard right, Sister ducked, then hit her square on the nose with a right cross. That quickly, Tuffy found herself sitting on the ground with a bloody noise. And almost that quickly, one of the recess teachers swooped down on Sister and Tuffy, pulled them into school, and sat them on the principal’s discipline bench. Sister’s mind was a blurry mix of pride that she had protected the baby bird and shock that she was sitting on the principal’s famous discipline bench. But she was even more shocked when she saw that Tuffy was crying. “What are you crying abut? I only hit you once,” Sister said. “I’m not crying about that,” said Tuffy. “Then what are you crying about?” Sister couldn’t help wondering what could make a cub as tough and mean as Tuffy cry. “If the principal tells my mom and dad about this,” said Tuffy, “I won’t be able to sit down for a—well, a long time.” Hmm, thought Sister. Here’s a cub who maybe gets hit a lot at home. Maybe that’s why she likes to hit other cubs at school. But Sister didn’t think about that for long. She was too worried about what was going to happen to her. Mr. Honeycomb, the principal, was very strict about fighting. The way it turned out, one of the other recess teachers had seen the whole thing and told Mr. Honeycomb that Sister was just trying to protect a baby bird. So Mr. Honeycomb let Sister off with a warning. As for Tuffy, the principal didn’t call in her parents. But she did lose a week of recess, and she had to visit the school psychologist twice a week for quite a while.

tuffy BEANS tuffy BEANS tuffy BEANS Tuffy Tuffy Tuffy Tuffy MR HONEYCOMB PRINCIPAL